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## [THE FLIRTATION.]

### MARIGOLD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Image in the Heart," "Sweet Eglantine,"  
"The Three Passions," &c., &c.

#### CHAPTER I.

Again rejoicing Nature sees  
Her robe assume its vernal hues,  
Her leafy locks wave in the breeze,  
All freshly steeped in morning dews.

BURNS.

EVERTON HALL, situated in the pleasantest and most picturesque part of Hampshire, was justly considered to be one of the loveliest country houses in England, a land peculiarly rich in aristocratic domains of the highest beauty.

This splendid residence was built of stone and brick, combining with its substantial roofs and pointed towers the excellence of the present century and a certain feudal aspect. Its vast size and its fringe of subsidiary offices were placed upon a gentle acclivity, the foot of which was graced with ancient forest trees, and it commanded a pleasing view of a rich valley, through which capriciously meandered a little river—its water, limpid, though not deep, winding hither and thither in sinuous channels, while aged willows and birches with their silvery barks gave a virent edging to the sparkling stream.

Meadow land, resembling a huge carpet of green velvet, stretched on either side of the river for some distance and formed the park attached to the mansion until it reached a skirting of wood, which from its density deserved the name of a forest.

Here browsed the antlered herd, and game of various kinds invited the attention of the hunter, as the stream attracted the skill of the more gentle angler.

This magnificent property, to which were attached more than four thousand acres of farm land, had been for centuries in the possession of the lords of Kimbolton—a race of country gentlemen, fond of sport, excellent horsemen, and the best shots in the county.

The owner of Everton Hall at the time our story commences was a simple, good-hearted squire, verging upon the age of forty; as master of the hounds he commanded the respect and enjoyed the acquaintance of his neighbours; as commander of the yeomanry cavalry he was endeared to the farmers; and as Provincial Grand Master of the county lodge he was well known to all Freemasons.

It would be difficult to meet with a man better known, more respected and beloved, than the fourteenth peer who enjoyed the title of Kimbolton.

He had been married nearly three months to a lovely and accomplished young lady, Miss Marigold Henderson, who was suspected by more than one of the county gossips of having allied herself to an ancient name and a wealthy house from mercenary motives.

A more devoted husband never existed. He adored his wife, and begrudged every hour spent in outdoor sports or duties which took him away from her side. At times she had an air of weariness, or even pain, as if this rare devotion was distasteful to her; but his lordship resembled those who have eyes and see not, who have ears and hear not, for he never ceased to call her his angel and to seek blissful hours in her loved society.

One evening, the declining sun, hidden by a long and narrow cloud, copper-coloured and fringed with gold, made the horizon resplendent with the most lively and varied colours; below the cloud was a space of considerable size, refracting *lapis-lazuli* blue, with a golden haze; higher up were large clouds of a purple tint; and again in the depths of the firmament were seen little rose-coloured flakes, on a groundwork of white, tinged with a faint azure. The distant tops of the stately trees swam in a transparent violet mist.

Now and then the depths of the valley gave out a confused sound of voices, accompanied by the barking of dogs, which was echoed back by the hills, then all was still.

In the drawing-room of Everton Hall two ladies near an open window contemplated with wandering eyes the magnificent scenery which we have attempted to describe, and listened to the distant

and occasional sounds which proceeded from the valley.

One of the ladies was Marigold, the mistress of the mansion, the wife of Lord Kimbolton.

The room was handsomely furnished and with becoming taste; flowers were displayed in vases, choice books lay upon the tables, valuable engravings and pictures adorned the walls. The piano was open as if some one had been recently playing upon it, and the newest music was scattered about in charming confusion.

Lady Kimbolton was reclining on a sofa covered with blue silk, and raised sufficiently high on pillows to be able to gaze from the window upon the beauties of spring already displayed in the park.

She wore a dress of pale gray silk, which served to set off to perfection her exquisite waist. Scarcely three-and-twenty, she was tall and slender, charming rather than strictly beautiful, above all things graceful and furnished with an unmistakable air of ladylike distinction. Her appearance was extremely delicate, and made one think involuntarily of the softness of a white rose. Her eyes were of a deep blue, having a dreamy expression almost melancholy in its sad tenderness; her lips, red as moist coral, contrasted strongly with the dead whiteness of her skin. An enamelled diamond locket was suspended from her neck by a piece of black velvet.

Her ladyship fixed her gaze upon the valley with a certain absence of mind. She bestowed little attention upon the magnificent sky which was displayed before her in all the splendour of the setting sun. She was entirely absorbed by her thoughts, and it did not seem that they were of an absolutely pleasant nature, for she either could not or would not chase away the cloud of sadness which rested on her brow and the expression full of bitterness which sometimes made itself visible in a half-smile on her lips.

It was difficult to say why she should be sad. She passed in society for the happiest and most fortunate of young brides. She had all that she could wish for in the world—youth, beauty, wealth, which brings luxury in its train, a and husband full of respect and tenderness.

The lady who sat near her was her aunt, Mrs. Henderson, with whom her youth had been spent, for she had been left an orphan at an early age. Mrs. Henderson had an independent income and moved in the very best society. Her niece, Marigold, though born of good parents, had been left with slender resources, and her aunt had spared no expense to educate her in London and Paris in such a way that she might contract a high and influential marriage.

We have seen that she succeeded in effecting this, the dream of her aunt's life; and, as neither the husband nor the wife evinced any disinclination, Mrs. Henderson after the honeymoon took up her abode with the newly married couple.

In the evening, when carefully dressed, Mrs. Henderson passed for a much younger woman than she was, for in reality she was five-and-forty, and had been fifteen years a widow. A thin waist helped the illusion as to her age. She was always attired in the height of fashion. Her features were, like those of her niece, of a classic cast, almost Grecian in the slender and well-chiselled outlines, and there was a sweetness in her smile which years before must have been irresistible.

A real affection existed between Mrs. Henderson and her niece Marigold, whose excellent marriage she regarded as the great achievement of her life, and as she looked at her in the fading light of the setting sun she felt uneasy at beholding her absorption and the melancholy which overspread her lovely features.

"You are a little pale to-day, darling," she said, in an affectionate tone of concern. "You do not go out enough. The weather is now fresh and spring-like. I must see to this. It will never do to let the roses fade from your pretty cheeks."

Lady Kimbolton started, and emerging from her abstraction answered:

"I do not think I am more or less pale than usual, dear aunt."

"You cannot deceive me, Marigold," returned Mrs. Henderson. "Six months ago the carnation in your cheeks seemed to have wedded the snow, now you are white as a lily. Why does the snow remain alone? When I was your age I had a colour. It is unnatural for young girls to be so pale."

"You were more beautiful than I, dear aunt."

"I will not accept that as an excuse, though the compliment is a pretty one," replied Mrs. Henderson.

"Besides," answered Marigold, "I never had much colour."

"Tell me frankly, now; does anything worry you? do you feel ill?"

"I was never better in health in my life."

"Then why are you so pensive and sad? There must be some reason for it."

"I did not know that I was so," said her ladyship, forcing a smile. "You have discovered a malady which I am inclined to think exists only in your imagination."

"Not at all," Mrs. Henderson answered. "I am not going to allow myself to be foiled in that way; there is something the matter with you, and I mean to find it out. Your eyes are too expressive not to tell the truth, my pet."

"What do they say, aunt?"

"They talk mysteriously of some hidden pain, and their brilliancy seems to be extinguished by a shower of tears shed in private."

"Sheer delusion, aunt," replied Marigold.

"Have you no confidence in me, my dear? Be frank with one who has proved that she loves you fondly. If I have not a right to demand your candour who has?"

"What do you want me to say?" rejoined her ladyship, slightly embarrassed. "I have nothing to conceal, and I am really at a loss to know what it is you ask of me."

"Something has taken place. You are not like your former self," said Mrs. Henderson, regarding her with a searching glance. "Are you envious down here? Is it that you sigh for the delights of the London season, now about to commence?"

"Not the least in the world."

"Sometimes one gets weary almost without knowing it. I have gone through that. The hours seem to grow longer; the amusements which a country house affords are simply a bore; one takes pleasure in nothing. The nerves are excited; one is irritated at the slightest thing, and one shuts one's self up to have a quiet cry. Are these symptoms like yours?"

"No," answered Marigold, drily.

"Then you are dissatisfied with your husband."

"He is not what you expected to find him."

"My husband!" cried Lady Kimbolton, colouring.

"What should he have to do with it?"

"Oh, the innocence of the rising generation," exclaimed Mrs. Henderson, laughing. "When I was young one's husband was an excuse for everything. If one had the tooth-ache it was the husband's fault, though I will do full justice to the late Mr. Henderson's memory, and admit that he was not a great trouble to me, and when I come to reflect I do not think I appreciated him as he deserved."

"I assure you, dear aunt, that I have no fault whatever to find with Henry," said her ladyship. "He is most kind and attentive. Therefore as there are no griefs existing I am unable to lay them before you. What my husband was on the first day of our marriage he is now; there is not the least diminution of his affection."

"This is extraordinary," cried Mrs. Henderson. "Here are two married people perfectly happy, which is a difficult state of things to find; it is quite a phenomenal union."

But she added, quitting her tone of rallery, and assuming an air grave if not severe:

"I can see how it is, my dear; it is as clear to me now as the full moon in a cloudless sky at midnight. You have ceased to love your husband."

The pallor of her ladyship—of which we spoke at the commencement of this conversation—deepened visibly, until she became livid.

"Do not let me be misunderstood," Mrs. Henderson went on. "It is quite possible that you are not aware of the change yourself, but it has taken place nevertheless. The reserve and the sadness that I have remarked in you can only be produced by two causes, and they are dawning or expiring love."

At these words Marigold almost sprang from the sofa on which she had been reclining, her pallor disappeared as if by magic, and gave place to a deep scarlet, which suffused her face and neck.

"Oh, aunt," she stammered, in a voice that emotion rendered tremulous and almost indistinct, "what have I done to merit this harsh and unjust suspicion?"

Mrs. Henderson took her gently but firmly by the arm, and caused her to resume her seat, saying:

"Be calm, dear, and let us talk as we always have done, like two friends, who are devoted to one another, and have each other's interest at heart."

As she spoke she kissed her niece's burning cheek. Marigold offered no resistance to her caresses, and sat down by her side on the sofa; but she remained silent, and two large tears were suspended like pearls at the side of her long, curling eyelashes.

"No one understands love better than I do," resumed Mrs. Henderson; "one is not free to love or cease to love at will, but I am so well acquainted with your high principles that I am far from either accusing or suspecting you. The heart is stronger than the will, and when the heart speaks its possessor must listen."

"But," said her ladyship, "when one has sworn to love one's husband, and no one but him, and this vow uttered at the altar has been registered in heaven, the heart has no right to speak."

"That is easily said, my darling; practice however is very different from theory. The heart is like a rebellious child—the more you tell it to be quiet the higher it raises its voice. You have grown up under my eyes. I know your character and disposition better perhaps than my own, and I recollect that five years ago you were passionately in love. It was your first love, and that is generally ineradicable. It is possible that even now the memory of your affection for Captain Anglesy will obtrude itself on your mind, and, fight as you may, you cannot wholly drive away the unwelcome phantom."

Mrs. Henderson might have proceeded farther with her remarks had not a remarkable change taken place in her niece.

Directly her aunt pronounced the name of Captain Anglesy Marigold became deeply agitated. All the blood in her body, flowing back to her heart, made her face as white and colourless as a mask of virgin wax.

If her eyelids had moved quickly, and her hands trembled violently, one would have thought she had fainted.

Mrs. Henderson regarded her niece with some anxiety when she perceived these alarming symptoms, and when she recoiled as though she would have fallen she supported her failing strength by placing her arm round her waist, and drew her tenderly towards her bosom.

Then she placed the sofa cushions under her head, which was so fair and so pale, and, taking a bottle of smelling-salts from a table, held it for her to inhale its restorative vapours.

At the expiration of a few seconds Marigold opened her eyes, and made a feeble movement. At the same time, with the speed of electricity, her aunt's remark came back to her.

"Oh, why—why did you mention that name?" she murmured. "Oh, you are cruel—cruel! You have no pity!"

"It was necessary that I should mention it," replied Mrs. Henderson. "I had hoped that you had forgotten him, but, as he still possesses a hold upon your memory, you must root it out, in justice to your husband. You must destroy all recollection of him or your heart will resemble a fair garden, the flowers of which are overshadowed by a poisonous and noxious weed."

"He is dead," answered her ladyship. "You have assured me that he died in India. You were averse to him because he was poor, and you drove him from

me in order to realize your ambitious schemes. He went; he sought the potential climate of the East, so fatal to Europeans, and there he found a grave."

"All this is very true, my child. I did separate you, because you were both poor, and would have only injured one another's prospects in life if you had married."

"Is there harm then in thinking of him who is dead and gone for ever, aunt? I do try to banish him from my memory—I do indeed—but, in spite of my resistances, I cannot always succeed," continued Lady Kimbolton.

Mrs. Henderson shook her head sadly.

"You have forced this confession from me. You have compelled me to look into the innermost recesses of my heart," continued the young wife; "and you have dragged the admission into the light of day, though the secret was hidden from myself, and now I shrink from the contemplation of the truth."

Marigold, poor child, bruised in spirit, and enervated, had not strength to resist her aunt's importunities, and she sobbed bitterly, her slender frame shaking with each convulsive movement, as if it would fall in pieces and allow the soul to fly away from its frail tenement.

"I see how it is," said Mrs. Henderson to herself; "she is too much alone here. Kimbolton is to blame. She must have distraction. The season is commencing; we must go to balls, fêtes, and parties once more. Yes, London society is the only cure for what may become a serious mental malady."

Suddenly the barking of dogs and the loud voices of the keepers, mingled with the laughter of gentlemen, was heard distinctly approaching from the valley.

Those sounds heralded the return of Lord Kimbolton and a party of friends from a coursing match which had been held that afternoon.

"Rouse yourself, Marigold, my dear," exclaimed her aunt, hurriedly. "It is time to dress for dinner; the gong will sound directly. Go to your room, darling; it will never do for your husband to find you in tears."

Marigold rose, and, leaning on her aunt's arm, for she was still weak and ill, quitted the drawing-room, and ascended the grand staircase to her bedroom.

"Dead!" she muttered. "He who was my love is dead, and they will not let me think of him!"

## CHAPTER II.

Mrs. Lovemore: Heigho! I have no comfort. Marigold: No comfort, ma'am? Whose fault, then? Would anybody but you, ma'am—it provokes me to think of it—would any one, ma'am, young and handsome as you are, with so many accomplishments, ma'am, sit at home here as melancholy as a poor servant out of place? And all this—for what? Why, for a husband. What do you think the world will say of you, ma'am, if you go on this way? The Way to Win Him.

ABOUT ten o'clock in the morning, a few days after the conversation recorded in the last chapter, a young, good-looking, sprightly, but somewhat diminutive fellow might have been seen at the back door of Everton Hall, vigorously cleaning a pair of top boots, which had suffered somewhat from the effects of the weather.

He whistled blithely as he worked, and seemed as handy a lad for the situation he filled as could be found, for he was valet, groom, and personal attendant to Lord Kimbolton.

Stopping suddenly, he looked up and beheld the doorway darkened by the form of a pretty girl, who occupied the position of maid to Lady Kimbolton.

Her eyes were large and somewhat treacherous in their deep blackness, her rich brown hair was covered with a coquettish cap which her mistress compelled her to wear, though much against her will. So thin was her delicate waist that you might almost have clasped it with your two hands. She had small hands and feet, and a provoking smile sat on her rosy lips.

"A lovely morning, Mr. Rouse," she exclaimed, glad of the opportunity to flirt with the valet, upon whom she was instinctively aware that she had already made some impression.

"You may well say lovely, Flora," answered Rouse. "It's as fine a day as I wish to see, and if the hounds were to meet the scent would be beautiful; we should have a splendid run, and—What's the matter that you are looking so black all at once?" he added as he broke off abruptly.

"Matter enough, I think," replied the maid, tossing her head. "We are coming to something. I allow no familiarity, not even from an upper servant—if I may dignify with that title a gentleman who fills so many offices as you."

"What have I done now?" he asked, setting down the boots and scratching his head in a clownish manner.

"You have called me by my Christian name, and that's a liberty. It's not etiquette, Mr. Rouse, as we say in the drawing-room, though I suppose I



must make some allowance for your country manners and bringing up," she said, severely.

"I ask pardon, Miss Merton," he said. "I haven't had the advantage of a London education like you. Master took me from the plough, and I never had much schooling; however, I'm told of it and it shan't occur again."

"You never were in London?" returned Flora Merton, regarding him as a remarkable specimen of humanity.

"Haven't had the luck, though I've heard it's a wonderful place. Master's promised to take me next time he goes, and that's something."

The maid's eyes sparkled as she replied:

"What would you say, Teddy, if I were to tell you that we are going to London?"

"There now," he exclaimed, with an injured air; "you call me Teddy, and I mayn't address you as anything else than Miss Merton. But is it true? Are we really going to London?"

"That we are; and there's news for you. No one knows it but me and you, now I've told you. The whole household's going, and we're to have a mansion in Belgravia for the season."

"Well I'm—," began Teddy; but he checked himself before the refinement of the lady's maid, and added: "Well I never—who'd have thought it?"

"My lady is not at all well," continued Flora. "Doctor Dawson came down from London and advised change; but all the change in the world won't do my lady any good. There's a riddle for you, Mr. Rouse."

"I never was much of a hand at riddling, Miss Merton," answered Teddy; "and if you'll kindly put me out of my misery by explaining I shall be deeply grateful to you."

"Perhaps you don't know that I've been in my lady's family as long as you have in my lord's, and of course I know what I do know."

"What's that?" inquired Teddy, staring at her with open eyes.

"My lady loved before she met Lord Kimbolton, and though her lover died in India she can't forget him."

"Lor' now, who'd have thought it!" said Teddy. "But females, Miss Merton, are curious creatures." "Female is not a word to apply to ladies, Mr. Rouse; I'd have you know that," answered Flora, indignantly.

"They call you the female sect, don't they?"

"Never mind what we're called in books, lady's the word, sir."

"I'm sure I beg your pardon, miss; I'm not so polished as I ought to be. It's my misfortune rather than my fault; though, coming back to where we started, it's a funny thing to me," said Teddy, "that my lady don't care for his lordship, because he's overcaressing at her feet, and a kinder husband never lived."

"That's just where it is, Mr. Rouse," replied Flora.

"Just where what is it?" he asked.

"Where the shoe pinches, as one may say—a husband can be too kind. There are very few ladies who like too much affection. A man degenerates into a bore and an intolerable nuisance if he is always dangling at a lady's side."

"I'm astonished!" exclaimed Teddy, pausing in his occupation. "But it all arises from my ignorance of the sect; the female sect—leastways I mean the ladies—is a mystery to me. But I'll ask you a question, Miss Merton."

"At your pleasure, Mr. Rouse," answered Flora, with a coquettish glance.

"Suppose—I only say suppose—a likely young fellow was to come to you and pop the question, as they say."

"Well?" she ejaculated.

"And you liked him well enough to go to church with him?"

"Yes?"

"And he was so very fond of you that he would not let you out of his sight, and always felt a pleasure in being near you, and having his arm round you, and all that sort of thing; what would you say?"

"Say, sir," repeated Flora, regarding him with a stern and severe glance. "I should say he was a nuisance, and I believe if that sort of thing went on long I should run away from him as I am going to run away from you."

She moved towards the door.

"Don't go, Miss Merton," said Teddy, with an appealing look. "You are like the sun when he comes out of a cloud, and 'livens things up a bit. It's awfully cloudy down here. Don't go—please don't."

The lady's maid favoured Teddy with a sweet but tantalizing smile, and, saying she had to attend upon her ladyship, tripped lightly away, leaving him gazing after her with a fond and longing air.

"There's a girl for you," he remarked. "That's what I call something like a girl. There isn't a horse in his lordship's stables that can beat her for beauty. Wouldn't she look well going across coun-

try with the huntsman's tally-ho, yoicks, tally-ho, ringing in her ears?"

The information that Flora had been the bearer of was correct. Lord and Lady Kimbolton were going to town for the season, and her ladyship was to shine in fashionable life, as her position, wealth, and beauty, entitled her to.

A house was taken furnished in Colchester Square, Belgravia, but the change did not seem to benefit Marigold as much as had been expected. She gave parties and accepted invitations; universally she was recognized as a lovely and accomplished lady, though even her admirers were forced to admit that there was a languid air about her which somewhat detracted from her charms.

If a person fails to take delight in anything, and this abstractedness is not only seen but felt by those with whom she comes in contact, a sense of depression invariably follows, and this was the case with Lady Kimbolton and her friends.

His lordship's attention increased; he was rarely long absent from her side, but he could not see that his devotion failed in the desired effect. The forced smile, the averted eye, and the irrepressible sigh were lost upon him.

One morning Lord Kimbolton after breakfast announced his intention of going to his club.

Marigold looked up with an expression of relief and exclaimed:

"I am glad to hear that you are going out a little more, Henry. You stay at home with me too much. I do not mean to say that your company is disagreeable, far from it," she added as she saw a shade of displeasure cross his countenance. "But you ought not to sacrifice yourself to your position as a husband."

"Ah," he said, "you do not understand me. I am going to the club to give in my resignation, because when I am there I waste precious hours which ought to be spent in your society, my pet."

Marigold stifled a groan.

He did not remark this, and kissing her tenderly went away in his brougham, which was waiting outside.

"He will kill me with kindness," she murmured.

Mrs. Henderson had been reading some letters near the window, and overheard her niece's muttered remark.

"Henry means to be good, dear," she observed.

"You should bear with him."

"Is not this constant espionage?" replied Marigold. "Methinks I am not left alone night or day for a single hour. Where is the woman who could bear such a state of things?"

"I am acquainted with several married ladies who would feel highly flattered if they were favoured with a little more of their husbands' society than what they get."

"Possibly. Extremes are bad, but I ask you, my dear aunt, if Henry is not too fond?"

"It is you, child, who are not fond enough," said Mrs. Henderson, shaking her head.

"We are a very unhappy couple, I fear," cried Marigold. "Heaven knows I love my husband, and try to do my duty, yet I should appreciate a little more time to myself; there is a luxury in being alone. Solitude has charms. If I could dine, ride, walk by myself it would be a different thing. Henry is too uxorious. It is possible for a man to be too fond of his wife."

"That is a new doctrine," exclaimed Mrs. Henderson, laughing, "and you will not, I think, find it a very general complaint in society. Men are too apt to rove, and the club has been the rock on which the happiness of many a married couple has split."

Marigold took up the newspaper and tried to pass away the time by glancing at its contents. Then she walked through the conservatory, and went upstairs to make her mid-day toilet.

It was nearly luncheon time when she again appeared in the drawing-room.

Mrs. Henderson had gone out shopping—that mysterious occupation in which all ladies find such an entrancing pleasure.

Scarcely had Marigold seated herself on the sofa when a loud knocking at the door announced her husband's arrival.

He entered the room accompanied by a tall, fair, gentleman, whose face was bronzed as if by exposure to a tropical sun. He wore a long beard, whiskers, and moustache, and though *blasé* was very handsome.

"Permit me, my dear, to introduce a friend to you," exclaimed Lord Kimbolton. "Captain Anglesey, Lady Kimbolton."

If Marigold had been pale before she became as pallid as death now. Her form was rigid and stony, and it was with difficulty that she could make a formal and constrained bow.

The captain regarded her with an air of astonishment not unmingled with a lively pity, but he did not betray any emotion.

Lord Kimbolton chatted on as was his wont, saying:

"At the club I met Doctor Dawson, who was

kind enough to introduce me to Captain Anglesey, who has not long returned from the East. He was going in my direction, and I was happy to have the chance of being his companion, and still more happy when he consented to stay to luncheon with me."

"I am glad to see Captain Anglesey," replied Marigold, in a frigid voice.

"We shall have quite a little party," continued his lordship; "the doctor is coming up with Wilfred Marshall, and they are going to play a game at billiards this afternoon, I backing the doctor. You must come upstairs, and grace the match with your presence, dear. Oh, here is Mrs. Henderson. Captain Anglesey, my wife's aunt."

Mrs. Henderson seemed startled, but the captain without any embarrassment walked to meet her as she entered the room, and, extending his hand, exclaimed:

"I think, if I am not mistaken, that a slight acquaintance existed between Mrs. Henderson and myself before I went abroad."

"Indeed," said Lord Kimbolton, "old friends, eh? That is peculiarly charming."

"Not that exactly," replied Mrs. Henderson. "Captain Anglesey and I have met at parties. I remember it now he reminds me of the past—quite a casual acquaintance, nothing more."

"Oh, no, nothing more," said the captain, while a half-smile played round the corners of his handsome mouth.

"Well," exclaimed Lord Kimbolton, "you will have an opportunity I hope of allowing the old acquaintanceship to ripen into friendship. Run away with your packages, aunt. Ah! another knock at the door. It must be the doctor and Marshall."

Mrs. Henderson left the room in some trepidation just before Doctor Dawson and Mr. Marshall entered it.

The former was a physician who had enjoyed a large practice, from which he had retired after realizing a handsome fortune. He only attended a few old patients, and that was done more out of friendship and a love of his profession than a desire for farther gain.

Mr. Wilfred Marshall was a barrister who rarely held a brief. He was undoubtedly clever, but he had an income of a few hundreds a year, and evinced a strong disinclination to work. Being in good society, he found a variety of ways of passing his time and put off the day indefinitely when he meant to begin to practise.

Every one liked him, for he was an agreeable companion, a good talker, an excellent billiard and whist player, always at the service of a friend, and invaluable in that sort of small talk which ladies find so charming.

As Mrs. Henderson left the room she looked significantly at Captain Anglesey, and raised her hand warningly as if she would counsel caution and prudence. He replied with a slight nod, and when the new comers entered a conversation sprang up between the gentlemen.

Lady Kimbolton rose and tottered towards the window. Her agitation was so marked that his lordship must have noticed it had he not been engrossed with Mr. Marshall, to whom he talked about the match at billiards which was to take place in his own billiard-room after luncheon.

The doctor joined in the conversation, and while the three chatted and lounged Captain Anglesey glided up to the window.

Touching Lady Kimbolton lightly on the shoulder, he said, in a low voice that thrilled through her:

"Have you forgotten me, Marigold?"

Not daring to turn her eyes towards him, she continued to gaze into the square, though the objects danced before her, and she felt as if she should faint.

It was by a great effort that she controlled herself, and she resembled a statue chiselled out of the cold stone, lifeless, but beautiful still.

## CHAPTER III.

Margaret: Dost thou tremble?

Then what should I, a helpless woman, do?

Imagine that, and, if thou art a man,

Feel for what I may suffer. *The Black Prince.*

No situation could possibly have been more embarrassing than that in which Lady Kimbolton found herself suddenly placed.

Captain Anglesey was the man who had gained her youthful affections. She had loved him tenderly and truly, and as we have seen had been unable to forget him after her marriage with another, and when she was told that he was dead.

To see him before her was a shock and a surprise which produced a species of stupefaction. She could not believe it real. Mrs. Henderson had told her with circumstantial minuteness that he had died of dysentery at Bangalore, and she had never hoped to see him again, but now she imagined that she had been deceived, and it is not too much to say that if she had entertained any doubt about his decease

she would not have become the wife of Lord Kimbolton, however alluring the prospect might have been.

Fortunately for Marigold Mrs. Henderson only went upstairs to remove her bonnet and shawl; she hastened down and came to her niece's rescue just as the unhappy lady felt her senses about to leave her.

"Captain Anglesey," she cried as she tripped into the room with an agility that would have done credit to a girl of seventeen, "we must have a chat about old times. Come hither and take a seat by my side on this ottoman."

Thus addressed the captain was compelled to leave Lady Kimbolton without having elicited from her any sign of recognition.

When he took a place by Mrs. Henderson's side that lady lowered her voice and said:

"Is it kind of you to try and awaken old recollections? You and Marigold must meet as strangers, or I shall take effectual steps to close the door of this house against you."

"My dear Mrs. Henderson," he replied, "do not be so cruel. Make some allowance for my feelings. I have not been six weeks in England, and after making ineffectual inquiries after my first and only love I meet her unexpectedly and find her the wife of another. Is it not enough to make a man take sudden leave of his senses?"

"We heard that you were dead, and as Lord Kimbolton offered himself he was accepted."

"Did you believe in the story of my death?" he asked.

"Undoubtedly, we had it with circumstantial minuteness."

"From whom?"

"I forget now," she answered, with evident embarrassment.

"Is she happy with her husband?" he queried. "Happy!" repeated Mrs. Henderson. "That is scarcely the word to describe their blissful existence. Kimbolton is devoted to Marigold, and the dear girl dotes upon him. You have been forgotten for years. That is another instance of the fickleness of the sex. Is it not?"

"I would have staked my existence upon Marigold's constancy," replied Captain Anglesey, with a deep sigh. "It has been my never-failing hope to meet her again and renew those vows that we uttered years ago."

"Nonsense, romantic nonsense. Marigold is married now, and I repeat that you must meet as strangers or I will take care that you do not meet at all. More than that—you must not stay here to-day. It is a most unfortunate thing that Kimbolton should have made your acquaintance."

"But I am invited; there is to be a billiard match, and—"

"I cannot help it. Plead a pressing engagement which you have just remembered. Go you must and instantly. Look at Marigold; the poor child trembles as if she had the ague. There will be a scene if you stop here."

"Everything occurs so suddenly that I am like one in a dream. Am I never to see her again?" asked Captain Anglesey.

"I will not say that, though what good your meeting can be to either of you I am at a loss to conceive. Still that will depend upon circumstances. Call here again in a week, and ask to see me. I will advise you," replied Mrs. Henderson.

"I would give the world for five minutes' conversation with Marigold."

"It is impossible. Would you bring about a scene and compromise her with her husband, who is very kind, but just the sort of man who would become alarmingly jealous on the slightest provocation?"

"Perhaps you are right," answered Captain Anglesey. "I will go for her sake, her sweet sake. I will try to forgive you for being the cause of my banishment."

So imperious was the tone that Mrs. Henderson adopted that Captain Anglesey was compelled to do as she told him. He advanced to Lord Kimbolton, and made as ready an excuse as he was able, promising to return in the afternoon if he could possibly manage it.

"Sorry you must go," exclaimed his lordship, in his frank and hearty manner. "But as you have business in the city which you did not think of when you accepted my invitation I will not detain you; as a friend of the doctor's I shall be glad to see you at any time, and when the shooting season commences I will find a gun for you and place a room at your disposal."

Captain Anglesey muttered something about his lordship being too good, and shook hands with the gentlemen, in vain trying to catch her ladyship's eye as he wished her and her aunt good-bye.

Lunch was soon after announced, and Marigold retired as soon as she was able, pleading indisposition. She retreated to her own room and found relief in a flood of tears.

Mrs. Henderson joined her without much delay, and, taking her hand in hers, said:

"Marigold, dear, a great misfortune has happened,

but you must be brave, you must summon all your fortitude and courage to your aid."

"Do not let me see him again," replied Lady Kimbolton. "Keep him away from me. It is misery enough to know that he lives and that our lives are sundered. I cannot bear to see him."

"I would rather have lost half my fortune, and I am not very rich," said Mrs. Henderson, "than that this should have occurred. I thought Captain Anglesey dead."

"So did I, or I would never, never have married any one else. Oh, the vows we took! I remember all that passed between us the day before he sailed as well as if it was yesterday. Poor Frank!"

"Marigold," exclaimed Mrs. Henderson, sternly, "you know I am your friend."

"Oh, yes, more than my friend—my second mother!"

"Then you are sure that I would not speak harshly unless I was compelled to do so, and that I would not willingly wound your feelings?"

"No, you are incapable of that," replied Marigold. "You have my interest at heart, but do, do pity me, dear aunt."

"I do pity you sincerely, but you must promise me to forget Captain Anglesey altogether. It is much more necessary that you should do so now than it was before. Do you remember our conversation at Everton only a short time ago? I read your thoughts—I penetrated your secret. I told you that your apparent unhappiness was caused by an improper dwelling on the past; and you blushed when I mentioned Captain Anglesey's name. You must forget him."

"I will try—indeed I will, aunt, though it is harder now than it was before."

"Think of your position—you are a wife; think of your noble name. The world is hard, and uncharitable people are censorious, dear Marigold. A reputation is soon lost. Women often do foolish things—meaning no harm—the consequences of which are ruinous, and they would give the world to recall their folly when it is too late. A breath can destroy a woman's character, and a scandalous insinuation has separated many a wife from her husband."

Lady Kimbolton checked her grief, though she spoke in an hysterical voice as she replied:

"Rest contented, dear aunt; I will do nothing that can disgrace my name. You shall have my assurance that I will not willingly meet Captain Anglesey again."

"With that assurance I will be satisfied. The captain has been dead to you for years, and he must remain so."

"It is my fate," said her ladyship. "Leave me, dear aunt. I will pray for strength and guidance, and soon I shall be calm."

"Dear child," replied Mrs. Henderson, kissing her, "your instincts were always good and pure. Heaven guard and protect you."

When she was alone again Marigold prayed very, very fervently that she might bear her cross bravely, and though her meeting with Captain Anglesey had opened an old wound, which had cicatrized, not healed, she determined that she would concentrate all her love and affection on her husband, and that not one traitorous thought should ever steal into her mind.

She had yet to learn that her aunt had cruelly deceived her by inventing the story of the captain's death, and destroying all the letters he wrote her from India.

Being poor, though of a good family, Captain Anglesey had gone to India, hoping to obtain a civil appointment, which he could hold in addition to his military rank, and thus enable himself to save a little money and come back an independent man to claim his bride.

Some anxiety had been excited in his mind when his correspondence with Marigold became onesided and he received no more letters from her.

But he worked on bravely, and when the time came for him to obtain leave of absence, he hastened back to England, but Marigold and Mrs. Henderson had left their old home in May Fair, and he did not know what had become of them until he met them in the singular manner we have described.

That Marigold was lost to him for ever he could not doubt, yet he experienced a melancholy satisfaction in beholding the only woman he ever loved in his life.

He was as much perturbed as Marigold when he quitted Lord Kimbolton's mansion, at Mrs. Henderson's instigation, and he felt that he had cherished a phantom while working in vain away in the far East, braving disease and death for a shadow.

He called upon Mrs. Henderson as she had requested him, and begged to be allowed to see Lady Kimbolton once more.

This request she refused in the most decided manner.

"Only let me see her once," he pleaded. "She shall not regret it. You may be present at the interview. Twelve hours after, and I shall be en route for the East."

"You will leave England!" said Mrs. Henderson, surprised.

"At once. I came back to claim my bride. She is mine no longer. She makes the heaven of another, and England is no place for me," he said, bitterly.

"It cannot be," returned Mrs. Henderson, thoughtfully. "I must not sanction any meeting between you and Lady Kimbolton, and I enjoin you strictly not to seek it. Come to this house no more, Captain Anglesey; you will best consult the happiness and peace of mind of her you once loved by taking my advice."

"So be it," he replied, with a sigh.

In a few conventional and stereotyped phrases Mrs. Henderson assured him of her sorrow and sympathy, recommending him to seek for another pretty face and loving heart; but, telling her his heart was broken, he left hastily.

As he drove away in a cab he muttered to himself:

"I will see her once more. Yes, we must meet again, and then adieu for ever."

Mrs. Henderson had virtually forbidden him the house, and he had few opportunities of meeting Lord Kimbolton, who, having sent in his resignation to his club, was more at home than ever.

When he did meet Kimbolton he was urged to repeat his visit to the square, but he made some excuse, knowing that Mrs. Henderson would resent his freedom and take effectual means to make his coming disagreeable to him. He wanted to see Marigold once more, and by herself. Why he wished to see her he scarcely knew. But he felt that he must see her once more before he returned to the East.

In India he had a splendid career before him, and he determined to return to that golden land, and in the preoccupations of military life try to forget the fickle fair one to whom he had given his heart.

How dear he still was to Lady Kimbolton he had yet to learn.

In the course of his peregrinations he frequently sought Colchester Square, and remarked that Flora, her ladyship's maid, often went into the square, carrying some needlework in her hand.

On one occasion he followed her.

Colchester Square differed in no respect from a hundred other London squares. There were the familiar trees and shrubs and grass plots, the summer houses and sequestered spots.

On a seat under a branching sycamore Flora took her seat, and busied herself with her needle; having some work to do, she had obtained permission to go out while her master and mistress were taking an airing in the park.

Hearing a footstep near her, Flora looked up and beheld Captain Anglesey approaching her.

She had heard of his unexpected return from the East, owing to some incautious words that Mrs. Henderson had let fall in her presence.

In the old days she had known him well, and regarded him, as did every one else, as the future husband of her young mistress.

He was sufficiently handsome and engaging to prove attractive to any young girl.

She did not pretend to notice him until he was close to her and had exclaimed:

"Flora, have you forgotten me?"

"Oh, Captain Anglesey," she replied. "How you startled me!"

"I am glad to see, my little girl, that you are as charming as ever," he said.

"If you say so I must believe you, because you have the reputation of being a good judge of female beauty," she answered.

"With such a pretty face, Flora, you must have a compassionate heart."

"Do you think so?" she asked, toying with her needlework.

"I am sure of it," replied Captain Anglesey.

"I won't contradict you," she said.

"That is right. Now, I want you to do me a service."

"Of what kind?"

"Most important. You must not refuse me," said the captain, anxiously.

As he spoke he felt in his pocket and produced a letter.

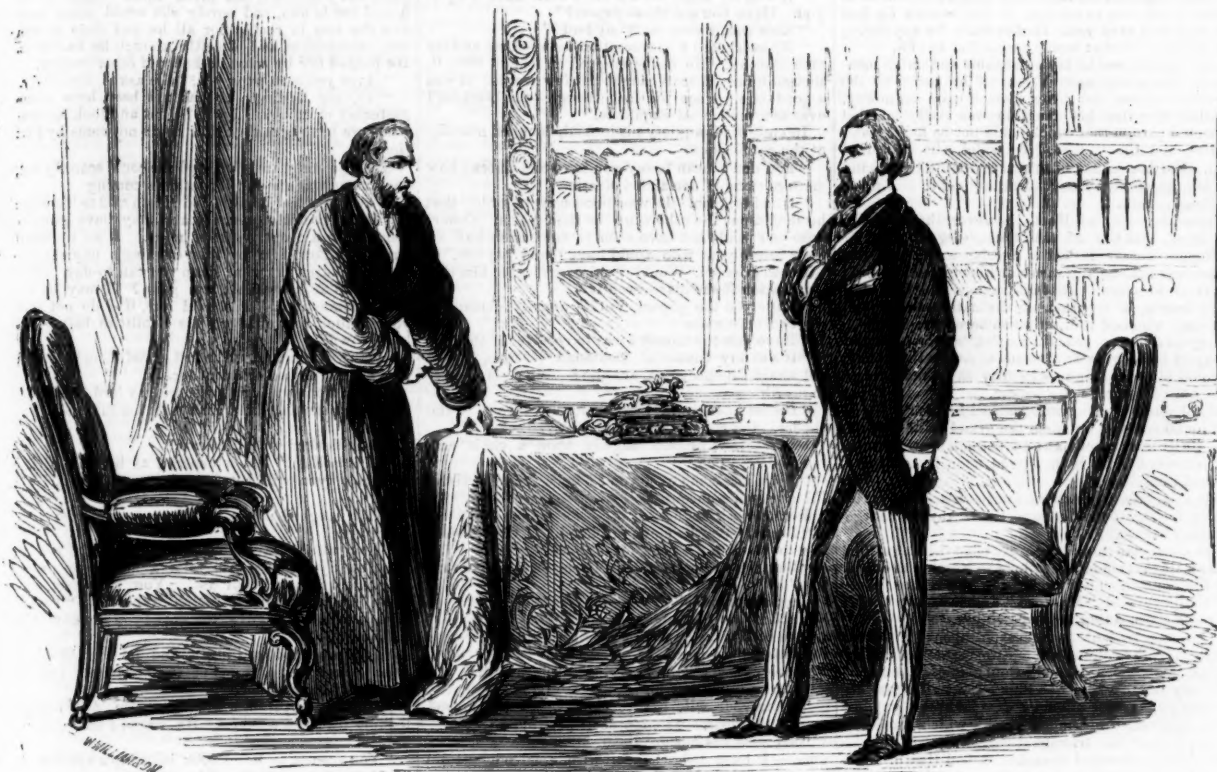
Flora regarded him with curiosity, but not with surprise.

"This is an adventure," she thought, "and my life is so humdrum that I cannot afford to lose a chance of being amused."

(To be continued.)

THE LANTERN OF DEMOSTHENES.—The well-known Lantern of Demosthenes in the park of St. Cloud, near Paris, destroyed by the Prussians during the war, is about to be rebuilt as before. It is the exact reproduction of a small marble edifice at Athens, purchased by the Capucin monks, and casts of which had been brought to Western Europe.





[THE INTERVIEW WITH LORD DANE.]

## LORD DANE'S ERROR.

## CHAPTER VI.

Things had begun make strong themselves by ill.

*Macbeth.*

HAVING attended to the luggage, Heath joined Sybil. His excitement was intense. The few seconds before the train began to move seemed to him as if they would never end, and he watched in turn every form of those hurrying to and fro in the gathering dusk, almost expecting to recognize Vassar among them.

But the train moved at last. They had started. For the first time since the reception of the telegram from Sybil's father Heath drew a free breath, and let his deep eyes fall with the glance of ownership upon the haughty, perfect beauty of the wife he had risked so much to win. Sybil did not look toward him. She sat with her face half averted, her dreamy eyes bent upon the fast-dimming landscape outside.

"Countess of Dane," she was saying to herself over and over again.

Heath leaned toward her.

"Sybil," he said; "my Sybil, now and for ever."

His wife smiled faintly.

"When shall I see my father?" she asked.

A sharp pang smote the heart of Heath at this question, but he managed to reply to it without any observable change of countenance.

"Very soon after our arrival, I hope, dearest."

Sybil returned to her musings. She was leaving Graystone behind her. She was going to that world of gaiety, dress and pleasure of which she had so often dreamed, and a throb of exultation mingled with her thoughts. Lord Dane eight years before had vowed in the bitterest terms that she should never be his wife, yet here she was Lady Dane, and she had been wooed as humbly as maiden ever was.

Presently an arm clasped her and Heath drew her slightly toward him.

She had no right now to resist that caress; perhaps she did not wish to do so. At any rate she yielded to it, and her husband bending down kissed her face for the first time. Some perversity of human nature made him put a question to her.

"What would you do, Sybil, if I told you this moment that I was not Lord Dane after all, but only Volney Heath?"

Sybil drew herself suddenly out of his embrace, and looked at him with angry, frightened eyes.

Heath smiled—forced himself to smile.

"Ah," his wife said, "you were jesting. I don't like such jests, my lord."

She waited for a moment and added, with scornful energy:

"I am not sentimental, Lord Dane—don't imagine it. Whatever fancy I had for Volney Heath was only fancy. If I had ever imagined myself enough in love with a poor man to marry him I should have hated him in six months afterwards!"

Heath whitened.

"You are frank, at least," he said; "nevertheless I cannot quite bring myself to despair of one day being loved for something beside my rank and fortune."

"I hope you may be," Sybil answered, coolly, and let her head drop to the cushioned back of her seat.

Her husband waited till her eyelids fell and then gently drew her little graceful head upon his shoulder.

She opened her eyes, but made no objection. Looking down upon her with a thrill of exultation, her husband caught the glitter of a slender gold chain at her snowy throat. He remembered it well. She had one day shown him what was upon it. To it was attached a singular ornament, a large flat oblong locket of thin gold, which opened with a spring, the secret of which Sybil had professed to be ignorant of herself.

"Papa gave it to me when I was eight years old," she had explained, laughingly. "It is a charm to secure me a good husband."

It was of this locket Heath had thought when he told Lord Dane that Sybil had in her own possession the papers he wanted. It was a plausible conjecture. For what purpose would so large and awkward an ornament be likely to be worn constantly unless for the concealment of something of great importance like those papers on which Lord Dane set such value? In his wild haste and anxiety lest something should interrupt the marriage Heath had, till this moment, scarcely thought of them.

It was absolutely necessary to him that he should obtain them, for he felt that, careless and easy though Lord Dane might be, he was not the man to part with so large a sum of money as fifty thousand pounds without first receiving into his own hands the documents of which it was really the price.

Those fifty thousand pounds Heath felt more than ever now were indispensable to him. Without them he could never hope to keep Sybil ignorant of his falseness two days. It was necessary that he should have them in order to sustain that style of expense which she would expect as that Countess of Dane she supposed herself to be. He gently lifted the chain upon that snowy throat.

"May I open your locket, Sybil?" he asked

Sybil lifted her beautiful eyes languidly.

"It is not there; papa took it away with him to London."

The heart of the exultant bridegroom sank like lead. He suddenly averted his face lest his wife should see the white change in it. But he need not have feared. She was asleep again already, and remained so during the greater portion of the night—she had not slept much the night before, it must be remembered—but he never closed his eyes.

Already it was coming home to him in direct shape that falsehood and wrong-doing can never prosper. He had yielded to the temptation of winning by a base deception the girl he loved so madly. She would be sure to know the truth some day; she might discover it at any time now if he could not obtain possession of those papers and through them of the money necessary to keep up the deceit.

If he had thrown himself on Sybil's generosity even now she might have forgiven him, for the proud and selfishly reared girl had a warm and sensitive heart under all her faults. But he dared not speak. He chose rather to put off that day of reckoning which must come, unconscious that the longer he waited the more difficult it would become to brave the indignation of the ambitious and high-spirited creature he had so cheated.

How could he dare the scorn and anger of those matchless eyes by telling her that she was not the countess she imagined herself, but only plain Mrs. Heath?

Anxious thoughts and vain projects flitted through his brain the night long.

He thought of leaving Sybil in London and himself returning to Graystone to meet Rupert Vassar and get the papers from him by any desperate means that might suggest themselves. But he could not propose that she should stay at an hotel, for this haughty girl who believed herself to be Lady Dane expected to go to Dane House, and there certainly he dared not leave her alone, believing as he did that it was she whom the true earl had met at Falkner. Besides, he suddenly remembered that, by the time he could reach Graystone, Vassar would have probably learned his accomplished treachery, and would be steaming back to London upon his track. They would pass each other as they had the night before, and Vassar got to Sybil and unmask him. No, no, that would never do.

Vassar would come undoubtedly by the evening express. He must be at the terminus and intercept him in some way, and keep him from his daughter by some means. How?

In his desperation the unhappy man clenched his

hands and ground his teeth with rage at this obstacle which threatened to rob him of the woman he had but half won even yet. He felt ready for any daring and wicked act that would secure her to him.

But first he would try reasonable and mild measures. He would meet Vassar if he came by the evening express, and throw himself upon his mercy. Possibly now that his daughter was really married he would pardon that which could not be helped, and forgive him the falsehood by which she had been won. For her sake, and to secure the fifty thousand pounds, he might even consent to yield to him those precious papers.

Something warned Heath, however, that it would not be so, that beneath that quiet, elegant exterior of Rupert Vassar lurked a tigerish wrath and vindictiveness that no arguments at his command would be likely to soften. That his rage would be something fearful it required no divination to foretell. The man who had so utterly shattered the fabric he had spent so many years in rearing had little reason to expect any favour at his hands. As for the money, he could himself wring twice fifty thousand pounds from Lord Dane with the papers.

Heath and his young wife reached London at dawn, and found waiting for them the grand Dane carriage with its liveried coachman and footmen in attendance.

That was as had been agreed upon between the earl and himself.

But a dark flush mounted to Heath's brow as he read in the significant looks of the lackeys in charge that they knew all.

The coachman touched his gold-laced hat to them with an air that made Heath long to knock him down, and the footman as he lowered the step of the splendid equipage said "My lord" and my lady "with the same sly meaning in his pale eyes.

Sybil was radiant as she sank upon the velvet cushions. She made no attempt to conceal her satisfaction, this sixteen-year-old Countess of Dane.

Volney Heath's face was clouded heavily, but his exultant young wife did not notice it as she bent her lovely gaze on the London sights which she was sweeping by as in a triumphal chariot.

Suddenly a dreadful thought assailed Heath. Lord Dane had promised to keep Vassar with him, and had not done so. Perhaps, then, Dane himself was at his town house at this moment, waiting for him to arrive with his bride. He would see Sybil, he would recognize her as the young and beautiful mystery he had met at Falkner.

Farwell then indeed to his chances of the fifty thousand pounds.

He glanced at Sybil.

Was it in reason to expect that any man would ever forgive him for having won from him such loveliness as hers?

"My darling," he said to her, suddenly, "have you a veil?"

She showed him that she wore one attached to her travelling hat, smiling slightly at his question.

"Would you mind dropping it as we enter Dane House?"

Sybil immediately let her veil fall, and her husband noticed with relief that it was a thick one.

If Sybil wondered at the request she was too proud to make any remark.

Only two footmen were waiting in the lofty and spacious passage-way, and while one threw open the magnificent portals the other officiously offered to conduct "my lady" to her apartments.

Heath's brow was hot with shame.

Had Lord Dane told his secret to all his menials? He gave the man a look which made him shrink, and ordered him to lead on.

Sybil was on his arm.

Adèle, the maid, came mincing along behind.

Every instant the anxious schemer was in deadly fear lest Lord Dane should suddenly step forth and confront them.

But he did not.

Leaving Sybil with her maid in the costly and beautiful apartments appropriated to her, he went ostensibly to try to learn where Vassar was, really to find Lord Dane.

A servant was waiting to conduct him to the library, whither his lordship requested that he would come immediately.

There was a bright fire in the polished grate, for the morning was cool, and the earl stood at one side in his dressing-gown. His face betokened much excitement.

"The papers?" were his first words. "You have got her, I see. Where are the papers?"

Volney Heath walked deliberately forward and took the other side of the fire. His face was pale, his lips firmly set, his eyes determined.

"The papers are safe, my lord; no thanks to you however," he said. "Why did you let Vassar loose on me? He came very near spoiling everything."

Lord Dane frowned angrily.

"It was my fault, but I'll more than make it up to you. Have you got those papers?"

"How was it your fault, my lord?"

"He overheard a conversation between me and my man Cheeny. He never stopped an instant after it, though he could have caught but few words. It was a good one to see his face though—the blackest I ever saw on mortal shoulders."

In spite of his anxiety his lordship laughed heartily at the recollection.

"You don't mean to say you have told Cheeny how matters stand?" demanded Heath.

"I had to, man. It was necessary in order that he should put the others up in their parts. Otherwise you would not have been in the house half an hour before your wife would have found you out."

Heath groaned. Would Sybil ever forgive him this humiliation if she discovered it?

"Have you the papers, Vol?" angrily demanded the earl once more.

"Have you the money I was to receive for them?"

"It's at my banker's. Confound it, man, you're not afraid I'll cheat you, are you? What is money to me?"

"I must have it in hand before I surrender the papers. I'm risking enough as it is."

Dane threw himself angrily upon a chair and reached for a pen.

"What has come over you?" he asked. "Here, I'll give you a cheque."

Heath shook his head.

"I must have the money in hand. I've an objection to going to the bank for it myself."

"But the bank won't be open for three hours yet."

"I presume not."

"Where are the papers?"

The earl's face darkened threateningly as he rose to his feet once more.

Volney stood outwardly calm and unruffled.

"Not with me, my lord."

"Then your wife has them still?" He moved toward the door. "I suppose she is your wife?"

"My wife has not got them. They are safe, however—I have lodged them with a friend. I did not expect to find you here. I will go for them as soon as I can leave my wife long enough."

The earl looked anything but patient or complacent.

"I'll entertain your wife while you are gone, if that will be any help."

Volney's face whitened.

The very thought of the true Lord Dane and Sybil meeting threw him into a nervous chill. That each would recognize the other he firmly believed, and he blamed himself bitterly for having brought her where it would be so difficult to prevent that meeting.

"Thank you," he said, coldly. "I would much rather you went to the bank. Besides, she remembers you quite too well for me yet, and has retained the old childish hatred of you to an extent that almost makes her detest me. She would inevitably recognize you."

Lord Dane coloured slightly.

He was conscious of a keen desire to see what sort of a woman the little ugly Miss Vassar of his remembrance had made. He was moreover morbidly curious to discover what it was about her which had so charmed Heath.

"I believe you said that I might give my own orders while I was here, my lord?" Heath said, reaching a silken bell-pull.

The earl bowed formally, and Heath rang and ordered breakfast in a saloon opening from his young wife's apartments.

"I will see you again shortly," he said as he was leaving the earl, who only bent his head haughtily and angrily in reply.

"How changed Heath is!" muttered Lord Dane to himself. "I never knew him to make a fuss about money before; and then so glum and long-faced. I wonder whether he feels bitter about this marriage already. It looks like it."

#### CHAPTER VII.

Fortune brings in some boats that are not steered.

HEATH returned to his wife. Sybil had exchanged her travelling attire for an elegant robe of white cashmere, and her beautiful hair hung in a shimmering fleece upon her shoulders.

She came eagerly forward to meet him, filled with anxious thought for her father. Her husband's arm clasped her to him. He experienced a wild thrill of rapture, which the perils of his position, far from lessening, intensified.

She was his—this beautiful, bewildering Sybil! She might find him out in the future—he meant to tell her all as soon as he dared; she would reproach him bitterly; she would be unforgiving at first, per-

haps, but she could not break those fetters which bound her to him, and surely she could never love him the less in reality for all he had done to win her, treacherous and deceitful though he had been. He judged her by what he knew of other women.

"Have you seen papa yet?" she asked, anxiously.

"No, my darling; he has not been here since yesterday morning. I will go out and look for him when we have breakfasted, if he do not come by that time."

Sybil's countenance fell, and she could scarcely eat, so anxious was she for her father's coming.

When they had breakfasted Heath said to his wife: "It is possible your father may have gone to Leusleigh, a country seat of mine. If so, we shall want to follow him by this evening's express; so you had better get what sleep you can to-day. Will you try to do so while I am gone? I may be detained some time. I should like, if I do not find your father, to settle all his liabilities before we leave town."

Sybil was touched. She felt grateful, and showed that she did in her eloquent face.

"I will do anything you desire, my lord," she said, lifting her bashful but sweet lips for her first voluntary caress.

Heath flushed with pleasure.

"My darling!" he whispered as he clasped her to him; "you will yet love me as I do you, I am sure."

Sybil laughed shyly, and drew away from him, blushing.

"You won't leave your apartments till I return, will you, Sybil?" he said, after a hesitating pause.

"Promise me you will not. You need rest, and then," he added, with reluctant hypocrisy, "I want myself to show you over the house you are now mistress of."

Sybil promised smilingly, and he turned away from her relieved of some of that torturing fear he had felt at leaving her.

As he passed through the ante-room Adèle stood looking from the window. He stopped and spoke to her.

"You are not to leave your ladyship's apartments at all during my absence," he said.

He was afraid even to trust the maid outside these rooms, lest some of the servants of the house should betray to her his secret.

Adèle looked up in surprise and rebellious, but she said nothing.

He had, however, caught the look, and he dared not trust to her obedience.

As he went out he locked the door and took the key with him.

"Sybil will never discover it," he thought, "and I'm afraid of that girl."

Sybil herself might not have discovered that she was locked in her apartments, but her maid very soon learned the fact, and in some excitement informed her.

She could not believe it then till she had examined for herself, and found that not only was the door locked but the key had been withdrawn.

For the first time a pang of real misgiving assailed the deceived young wife. She was absolutely a prisoner.

"What can it mean?" she asked herself. "Could he not trust my promise not to leave my rooms till his return? And he made me veil my face too as we entered the house. Why should he lock me in here? Oh, I wish papa would come. I shall never feel natural again till I have seen him."

Adèle made such lamentation, and wonderment as she dared, but she had already learned to stand in awe of her imperious young mistress, and Sybil was not one to betray her own uneasiness to a servant.

She went presently and lay down upon her bed, as she had promised her husband she would, and recommended Adèle to try to get some rest at the same time.

She could not sleep herself. Her mind was in too disturbed a state. Not that she had the most remote suspicion of the truth, but she could not rid herself of an angry, distrustful sensation as difficult to control as it was to analyze.

Little she guessed how much hung upon the next few hours.

Heath knew that a train left the station nearest Graystone at two o'clock in the morning. He calculated that Vassar would arrive at that station at midnight. That would give him ample time to go to Graystone, learn what had happened, and be back for the two o'clock express.

He had formed the desperate resolve of intercepting him as he left the train, and insisting upon an interview.

In that interview he would throw himself entirely upon the mercy of the man he had so wronged. If that did not answer, if neither argument nor entreaty could move him, he would take high ground and stand upon his marital rights, warning Vassar



that in preventing him from scouring the fifty thousand pounds he doomed his daughter to a life of poverty.

At the worst, if all had to be known, and he degraded in Sybil's eyes, he would still never give her up—never, never.

Meantime, until that train came, he dared not go back to Dane House lest he should encounter the earl, and be called upon for the papers he had given him to understand were already in his possession.

He was too restless and miserable to stay quietly in one place, and he lurked about in obscure streets, with his hat slouched over his face, and his coat collar turned up, for fear of meeting and being recognized by Dane.

The two-o'clock express came up to time, and Heath, still with his hat pulled well over his haggard, anxious face, was there, straining his eyes at the passengers as they poured forth.

Vassar was not among them.

He was just accepting the fact as best he might when he saw the man Hall, from whose hand he had taken the telegram at Graystone.

He sprang forward with a muttered ejaculation. Hall saw him and tried to get away, but Volney's grasp closed on his arm like a vice.

"Is your master with you, Hall?" he asked, huskily, slipping a bank-note into his hand.

"No, sir," he replied, his fingers closing guiltily on the money.

"Where then?"

"At Graystone, sir." He hesitated, and added, "His horse threw him on the way to catch the train."

Volney started, half exultant in his anxiety.

"He was not killed?"

"No, sir. Broke his leg, that was all. He had to stop then long enough to have it set."

"He didn't send you up here?"

"Yes, sir, he did."

"What for?"

"That's telling," said he, with a cunning look.

Volney took out another bank-note.

"What is your price?"

"Fifty pounds," said Hall, boldly.

Volney examined his pocket-book.

"I haven't so much with me. Here are ten pounds.

It's all your information is worth, and you know it.

I won't give you a penny more."

"All right, sir, if you like to run the risk," said

Hall, insolently. "I don't say it is worth more, but

I won't betray my master for a pitiful sum like that."

Heath's lip curled with scornful rage.

"You bound!" he said, "what harm can you or

your master do now? Mr. Vassar's daughter is my

wife past help."

Hall stood sulkily silent and obstinate.

Heath glanced at his watch. It was half-past two,

and the key to Sybil's rooms was in his pocket yet.

"I haven't time to dally with you," he said,

hoarsely; "tell me, and you shall have the money."

"I was to find Miss Sybil, and tell her the truth."

"The truth?"

Hall grinned.

"Who you be, sir. If I couldn't do that I was to

give this to Lord Dane."

He showed a sealed letter.

"Was that all?"

"Yes, sir."

"Give me the letter."

Hall drew back.

"Ten pounds for the letter," said Heath, com-

temptuously.

Hall yielded it.

"There are ten pounds of your money," continued

Heath, giving him the note; "the rest—be here when

the seven-o'clock express goes down to-night, and you

shall have your money."

Hall took the note.

Heath wheeled, and, hailing a cab, ordered the man

to drive like lightning to Dane House.

Meanwhile he took out the letter to Lord Dane and

held it for a moment, studying the unbroken seal with

a faint crimson stealing up through the ghastliness of

his face.

He put it slowly back into his pocket at first, mut-

tering:

"I have not sunk so low as that yet."

Then he drew it out again, with an impatient ex-

clamation, as he tore it open.

"It concerns me more than it does him, and I'm

started on a road that has to be followed to the end

whithersoever it leads."

The letter was brief, but to the point.

"My Lord,—I cannot be mistaken in discovering

your hand in this base piece of treachery. Undo

your work, or the papers of which these enclosed are

the literal copies go into court within the week."

"VASSAR."

The copies referred to were already in Heath's hand.

A daring thought crossed him. They should go to

Lord Dane as the genuine ones.

He never glanced at their contents. If he had done so this chronicle would have ended here, for these papers concerned him quite as much as they did Lord Dane.

It was only another instance where the right would have paid better than the wrong way, even in this world.

If Volney Heath had wooed Rupert Vassar's daughter perseveringly, boldly, and openly, and without deceit, he might have won her with her father's proud consent, and, what was of far more importance, the approval of his own conscience.

For he would have thus blundered upon a truth which, like the magic wand in the fairy tale, would have changed him—the needy gentleman without lands or honour—to one whom even the wayward, mercenary, and ambitious, but still in many respects noble-hearted Sybil would have chosen before all men for her lord.

There would have been then no ugly secrets to hide—no black record of falsehood to conceal. He would not have had as now to flee like a tainted criminal before his pursuers, plunging deeper and deeper into the mire of that evil way upon which, once started, it became less and less easy to turn back till it was too late.

He tore the letter into small pieces, and put the papers inside his pocket-book.

Arrived at Dane House, he hurried to Sybil.

She met him coolly.

Heath saw the change, and guessed the cause. It smote him bitterly to receive coldness from her, but he could not explain.

"Mr. Vassar has gone to Lenseleigh, as nearly as I can ascertain," he said to her. "It is important for his own sake that we follow him without delay. I had thought of going to Lenseleigh for a few weeks at any rate, Sybil. If you approve we will take the first train, which leaves at seven. It is now five."

"Very well," Sybil answered, still coldly, and Volney went to meet Lord Dane.

The money was ready for him. He surrendered the papers into his lordship's hand, watching him with strong curiosity while he looked them through.

A shrewder man than Lord Talbot Dane would have been suspicious of the fresh, unaged appearance of the copied documents, but exultation was the only emotion his lordship's brain had room for at that moment.

With a triumphant laugh, and an anathema for Vassar, he flung the papers on the fire, and watched them burn.

Then he shook Heath violently by the hand, and told him he was a good fellow after all, and never

was fifty thousand pounds better earned.

Heath had stowed the money carefully away—fortunately it was in large notes. He smiled rather grimly at my lord's gratitude, and announced his immediate departure for the Continent.

He had decided under the circumstances not to trust even the earl with the secret of his true whereabouts.

Orders had already gone to Lenseleigh for his reception there with his cheated bride, and it would take time to countermand them. Beside, his lordship was, he knew, a direful procrastinator, and might postpone such countermanding indefinitely, especially as Lenseleigh was somewhat remote, and he would not soon find out that his enemy was there.

Yes, enemy. Enemies they would be henceforth, he felt.

"It is a pity I cannot be presented to your wife," were among Lord Dane's last words. "I can't tell you how curious I am to see a woman who could bewitch you so, Vol. Couldn't you manage to get me a sight without her knowing it?"

Heath shivered with inward rage and impatience, but he answered, with a smile:

"If you will wait till we return, my lord, from abroad, I shall be happy to present you."

Lord Dane laughed in his turn, though rather

coarsely.

"Oh, yes, I understand. You want to try the Continental polish first—eh, old fellow?"

Heath's lips quivered, but he only compressed them without reply.

Dane came closer to him.

"I say, Vol," he said, dropping his voice, "I'm sincerely sorry if you've gone and sacrificed yourself for my sake."

Heath laughed harshly.

"I've done nothing of the sort, my lord."

"Was it the money then? Were you in debt, old boy? You're a deal more of an honourable dog than I am, and, though you wanted the money, you scorned to take advantage of a woman—eh, Vol?"

Volney Heath barely suppressed a groan. He honoured! He scorned to take advantage of a woman!

He tore himself away from Dane's detaining hand in a sort of frenzy.

"It is time to go, my lord—farewell!" he said, and hurried off.

Sybil assented coldly when he forced himself to ask her to veil her face again on going out from Dane House.

"One would think I was some criminal fleeing from justice," she said to herself, angrily. "Why is he so afraid of my face being seen?"

As the luxurious equipage containing Heath and his wife drove away from Dane House another, a handsome brougham, whirled up. The earl himself came hastily out and entered this, after which it was driven rapidly in the same direction the first carriage had gone.

Heath and Sybil exchanged few words during the ride to the railway.

Hall was waiting for his money. Heath saw him and hurried Sybil inside the special carriage he had secured, lest her eye should fall on him also.

Glancing back at Adèle, who was following, he saw that Hall had been seen and recognized by the sharp-eyed maid.

Adèle was just springing forward to say "My lady, here is Hall," when Heath held up a gold piece, his tongue forming the one syllable:

"Hush!"

The shrewd Frenchwoman was dumb instantly, and a moment after pocketed the gold piece with a glance of cunning intelligence.

Heath sought Hall, and paid him the rest of his money.

"We are going on the Continent," he said to the man. "You can tell your master if you like. By the time he finds us—"

He paused abruptly, some chill memory or foreboding creeping over him perhaps.

He retraced his steps abruptly, and was just leaping upon the step of the carriage in which Sybil was when Lord Dane caught his arm.

His lordship's face was blazing with eagerness.

"I've seen Miss Channing," he cried; "she's in

this carriage. I saw her face at the window."

The carriage to which he motioned was the one in which Heath had left his wife, and Miss Channing was the assumed name of the girl Lord Dane had fallen in love with at Falkner.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Strong reasons make strange actions.

King John.

VOLNEY HEATH felt the colour leave his cheek. Too well he guessed whose face the earl had seen at the window. But as well meet the truth now as at any other time. After all he had done Lord Dane no real wrong.

If Sybil was indeed the mysterious Miss Channing whom Dane had met and loved at Falkner he could not be expected to know it.

Had not the earl indeed voluntarily surrendered to him whatever superior right he might have possessed to woo the daughter of Rupert Vassar, that bright, dazzling creature whom he, Volney Heath, had married?

But at the same time, if Sybil and Miss Channing were the same person, a mutual recognition could hardly take place between herself and Mr. Talbot, as Lord Dane had called himself at Falkner, without Heath's own identity being liable to exposure by the hot-headed and impulsive nobleman.

While these thoughts darted lightning-like through Heath's brain Lord Dane continued to speak lightly.

"She drew back when she saw me, but not before I had recognized her, and I tried the door of the carriage, but it was locked."

Heath had the key in his pocket at that moment.

"I tell you, Vol, I haven't found her after so long to lose her again in the same moment. I mean to go on with you. You shall present me to your wife, and I'll do the civil I promised you. You may call me by any name you like and I'll swear by it."

Heath averted his startled face.

"It is impossible, my lord," he said, coldly, and at that moment the engine whistled its shrill warning for departure.

Heath wrenched himself loose from the earl and sprang upon the platform.

Dane leaped after him.

"I'm going, my boy," he said, between gaiety and sternness. "You can't help it now."

Heath glared upon him so savagely that Dane recoiled involuntarily.

"Are you going mad, Vol?" he muttered. "Come now, none of that!" as Heath gripped him fiercely by the shoulders.

The next moment the train was beginning to move. He felt himself lifted and hurled bodily from the platform.

Regaining his equilibrium with difficulty, he be-

held the whole long line of carriages moving swiftly away.

Heath stood talking to the guard.

While he looked Heath turned, took the key of his carriage out of his pocket, and held it for an instant for Dane to see. Then he unlocked the door, opened and stood before it a moment, and deliberately entered and closed it.

Inexplicable as it all seemed, the enraged earl lifted his clenched hand towards him.

"I should like to understand this business," he muttered, angrily. "I don't believe it's all for fear his wife will recognize me. By Heaven! I believe he has gone into the very carriage in which I saw Miss Channing. And he kept his wife veiled all the time, and would not let me see her. If it were not for those papers I should begin to think he had stolen a march on me and married Miss Channing instead of Miss Vassar. It would be a bitter joke, by George! if he has got fifty thousand pounds out of me to marry Miss Channing on. I believe I should kill him. I know he has played off on me in some mysterious way."

Musing thus, and moving like one in a dream, his lordship had entered his carriage, and was being driven homeward.

But at this point in his musings he suddenly stopped the equipage, and ordered the man to return to the terminus.

Arrived there, he flung the door back himself, and leaped out. Dashing into the ticket office, he spoke hurriedly to the chief clerk:

"I want to overtake that train—can you spare me an engine?"

He threw down a hundred-pound note.

The man he addressed knew him well. He thought for a moment.

"We can, my lord," he said. "There won't be another train for two hours. The risk will be nothing if you don't try to return."

His lordship uttered an ejaculation of satisfaction.

"Can I overtake it?"

"Doubtless."

Meanwhile Volney Heath had entered the carriage in which he had left Sybil.

She sat by a window, Adèle some distance away, and neither moved nor spoke as he came forward and sat down beside her.

"Sybil," he said, in a low voice.

No answer.

"Lady Dane."

A faint colour rose in the white cheek of the girl who believed herself Countess of Dane. She turned and looked at him coldly, yet with her eyes shining.

"Why did you look my door when you went out? Why were you so fearful of my face being seen at Dane House?"

Heath met that glowing glance steadily for a moment.

"I cannot tell you," he said, slowly.

Sybil said no more.

Heath turned in his seat and leaned his head upon his hand, watching the beautiful, half-averted face of his wife with brooding eyes.

What if Dane had forced his way into the carriage and spoken with her. The bare thought chilled his blood. Dane's anger, Sybil's contempt—ah! how she would despise him if she knew all!

Suddenly Sybil turned and looked at him. His eyes chanced at that moment to be closed. She could but notice how ghastly his face was, with the pallor which anxiety and sleeplessness had written upon it.

"He has been worrying all day over those debts of papa's," she thought, "and here I am quarrelling with him for nothing. I don't care if he did lock my door. How good and kind and handsome he is!"

Then she bent her lips to his ear and whispered:

"Talbot."

Heath started guiltily at hearing himself called by Dane's name.

Sybil took the start entirely for surprise at her own kindness, and smiled pleasantly.

"Do not look round for a moment," she said.

"There is a young girl sitting near Adèle, a young and exceedingly pretty girl. She must have been put in here by the guard through mistake. She is watching you every time I look that way. I think she knows you."

The self-styled Lord Dane did not start again, but an agonized thrill ran through him. Some one who knew him!

He waited, petrifying with apprehension, then he turned his head with a mechanical movement.

Adèle sat not far away, and nearly facing her was a young girl whose bright, piquant beauty was not dimmed even by coming in contrast with Sybil's dazzling loveliness. There was a world of character in the spirited young face. The light of a rare determination and roguery combined shone in the large, dark-lashed brown eyes.

It was true that her gaze was fastened upon the countenance of the pretended earl with singular and eager intentness.

Over the rich red lips broke a brilliant smile as she met his glance. She nodded as she laughed at his amazement.

Volney Heath's face was already ghastly white, but it seemed to take a grayer pallor at sight of this arch and beautiful young girl. Then he turned slightly.

"Excuse me, my wife, that is my foster-sister there. I must go and speak with her if you will permit me."

Sybil rose at once.

"I will go with you."

"Pardon, I will bring her to you. She does not know that I am married yet. I will bring and present her to my countess."

Sybil smiled and sat down.

"She knows it by this time. I saw her speaking to Adèle."

Heath's lips twitched.

To Adèle? She might already have betrayed him then.

The next moment he stood before the lovely stranger, her hand clasped in his.

(To be continued.)

## ADA ARGYLE.

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

INTENSE as were Rashleigh's interest and curiosity to learn the contents of the note which he had so mysteriously received, he walked to the avenue and turned the corner before opening it.

There were but few words in pencil, and without signature:

"Call at the house next east of this, at seven o'clock this evening, and inquire for me."

That the note was from Miss Winslow he could not doubt, and the antagonism at which it hinted between father and daughter strengthened some suspicions which he had already begun to entertain in regard to the former.

Winslow was an interested party in the property question; his appearance and his manner were unprepossessing, and his story, in fact, had obtained credit in Fred's mind chiefly by reason of its inherent probability, and his doubts whether any sane person would throw away a large fortune upon a stranger in the way which Mrs. Blenheim proposed.

Like many other persons, too, in whose minds the faculty of hope is not large, he had found it very difficult to believe that any such good fortune could possibly befall him.

Then the fact that Alice had not made her appearance, although his visit was by appointment, had added confirmation to these views, and seemed to him an acknowledgment on her part that she had been mistaken or misled.

But now it was evident that she was acting in fear of her father, and the offered interview he thought might yet result in disclosures favourable to his hopes.

His pride revolted at the idea of seeking the prize which had been so freely offered him, but he could not conceal from himself the fact that the loss of it now, after he had indiscreetly raised his father's expectations so high, would be very grievous.

He resolved, of course, to meet Miss Winslow, but there were more than two hours to be disposed of before seven o'clock, and what should he do with this interval of suspense?

He resolved to return to his lodgings, and inform his expecting father exactly how affairs stood, so that if the final news proved unfavourable he might be prepared for it.

He did this; and he found Mr. Rashleigh, as he had expected, impatiently awaiting his return, and eager to hear his news.

"How much, Fred? How much is it?" he asked.

"I have not raised my hopes very high, so that you need not be afraid to tell me if the amount is small."

"I am not certain that it is anything yet, father. I am sorry that I said anything to you about it until I knew; and I—I—am really placed in a very mortifying position. [I have a mind not to go back there at all.]"

"Why, Fred! What is this?" asked the father. "I thought you looked dejected when you came in. Is it a mistake? Never mind, my boy; we shall be no worse off than we were before."

But Rupert's flushed and perturbed face did not express the contentment which his words recommended.

"I'll tell you how it stands," replied the son. "I met an old popinjay there who says it's all a mistake, and that Mrs. Blenheim is crazy and is at the point of death, too. He is her brother and the father of the young lady I saw yesterday."

"Dear! dear! That is bad news, certainly. Did you see the daughter?"

"No. He said Miss Winslow could not see me, but she or somebody else threw this note out of an upper window just as I was coming away."

Rupert read it, and said:

"Oh, oh! Well, that certainly means something! You must go back, of course."

Then, after a little reflection, he added:

"I'll tell you how it is. Winslow is Mrs. Blenheim's brother, you say?"

"Yes, sir."

"And her heir-at-law, undoubtedly. She is not insane—not a bit of it. She is probably very ill, and he wants to keep you away from her until she dies without a will, and then the property would be his!"

"It may be so. I suspected something of this."

"It is! it is! It's as plain as a b c. Go back there now and do not be too modest; and if Mrs. Blenheim should want you to have this property don't be cheated out of it by such a rogue as that. It would be something to disappoint him."

"So it would," said Fred. "Quite a pleasure. Well, I'll go, of course, but it is best not to expect anything now. I may come back, you know, with news that Miss Winslow confirmed her father's story."

"Well, well! then we'll know the worst, and content ourselves with it. But don't be put off or gammoned by a man of perfumes and essences. You have sought no favours of Mrs. Blenheim, but if that good woman chooses to bestow them you do not want to be cheated out of them by a man like Winslow."

"That's it," said Fred, whose pride was salved by this view of the case, and he now started on his return up town, for he had not much time to spare.

A few minutes after seven o'clock he rang the bell at the house designated in the anonymous note, and, to his surprise, the door was opened by Miss Winslow herself, who asked him in, and preceded him through the two large parlours into an elegant library.

"My friend Mrs. Welles," she said, "has been kind enough to allow me to meet you here, and I am so glad that you have come promptly, as I have not much time at my disposal; and now will you be good enough to tell me, in brief, what my father said to you this afternoon?"

"Certainly, but allow me first to ask how is our friend Mrs. Blenheim?"

"Yes—I should have told you, but I am so impatient. Aunt is awake and comfortable at present. When you were at the house she was sleeping very soundly under the effects of an anodyne which we administer for certain spasms that she is subject to. I do not consider her dangerously ill, and, as nearly as I can ascertain, her regular physician does not, but a consulting physician whom my father has introduced here thinks otherwise, which opinion he shares. Aunt herself also thinks she has but a very short time to live."

"Is she quite rational?"

"Always!" said Alice, very emphatically. "That brings us back to my first question. What did my father say to you this afternoon? You have no scruples about telling, I presume?"

"Not the least. I will relate it all as nearly as I can recollect."

He did so, and the young lady, though an intent and evidently excited listener, did not interrupt him or manifest a desire to speak until he had finished. Once or twice she put her handkerchief to her eyes, but when he came to a pause she smiled brightly and said:

"Father is eccentric. You will receive with entire confidence what I tell you about him, and about these statements of his?"

"Most certainly."

"A daughter's first duty is of course to her parents, to whom under ordinary circumstances she owes the highest respect, filial love and obedience. Some painful circumstances which I need not name absolve me in part from these obligations, and indeed render a perfect discharge of them impossible."

"Besides this, my aunt has a paramount claim on my obedience at present. She has adopted and educated me. I have but recently returned from a boarding-school at which she has supported me for years. I am her confidante in all things—her child, she says, and, if so, certainly her only one now—and I am to be her heiress. You perceive how full a claim she has upon my love and loyalty."

"Nothing could be stronger."

"When I returned to her from school a short time before poor Cousin Frank's death she informed me of her designs towards you—and after that mournful event, at her dictation, I wrote to you the letter which brought you hither."

"Is it possible?"

"A draft of that letter, which I neglected to destroy, fell into father's hands, and betrayed the secret



which we had designed to keep from him; for this draft explained aunt's intentions more fully than the letter itself, as on copying it she decided to omit certain explicit parts and leave them for a personal explanation. But all this he saw, and thus he knew the whole story. He has since tried all means to dissuade his sister from her purpose, alleging that her first duty is to her relatives, of whom there are only two. He is already independent—partly by her bounty—yet he thinks all aunt's fortune should be kept in the family. She has determined otherwise; yet he exercises a strange influence over her, and although she is resolved to have her own way she seems afraid to assert herself and act in open defiance of him. She is in such a nerveless state.

"I understand. Does your father live with Mrs. Blenheim?"

"Oh, no; he lives an hotel life, being a widower, and without family, except me. He is extravagant, and—and—but I must not speak of his faults farther than necessary to vindicate my aunt. He must have watched for your arrival, or—or—paid some of the servants to tell him when you came, and as to the nature of your interview with me, of course, he easily guessed it. To-day he remained in the house waiting for your second visit, and he forbade my seeing you."

"I had guessed as much."

"I need say little more. All that he told you of aunt's mental weakness is—is—incorrect, every word!—every syllable! We will say he is mistaken. As to the rest, your promised fortune is sure! It is already secured to you by will if Mrs. Blenheim should die, but he does not know or suspect it, or else he would realize that all his labour is lost in trying to keep you from it. If aunt recover she will at once see to the transfer of the property to you."

"I am certainly greatly beholden to her and to you."

"Not to me; or, if you are, let me beg that you will show it by forbearance towards my father—forbearance in opinion, I mean. Let us say that some monomania afflicts him! Let us throw the mantle of charity over his acts!"

"With all my heart. Surely the father of such a daughter cannot be very bad; but, whatever his weakness or his errors may be, my lips shall be sealed in regard to them."

"Thank you. You are very kind. He has his good qualities, too; and you will find him very pleasant when he learns that it is useless to oppose you. He forgets all differences very quickly."

Fred did not feel oppressed with this picture of old Winslow's magnanimity, and he could not forbear replying, with a smile:

"He will forgive me, I suppose."

"Exactly," replied Alice, also laughing; "and it is not a little he will have to forgive, either—not less than twenty thousand pounds, which he had hoped would one day be his, or mine, which I believe he regards as quite the same thing."

"Twenty thousand pounds!" exclaimed Frederick.

"That was Cousin Frank's fortune; and it will be yours, with some accumulations, I believe." Rashleigh was overwhelmed with these tidings, nor did he seek to conceal his joy and surprise, but gave way to a natural, boy-like glee, shaking hands with Miss Winslow, and begging her in some way to make Mrs. Blenheim sensible of his gratitude and of the happiness she had conferred upon him.

"Aunt will be most delighted to hear it," said Alice. "She had wished to be present and witness your first raptures; but she insisted on my telling you to-day, and requested me also to let you know that she did not confer this wealth upon you without some other knowledge than she had gained of you by that one act of heroism. After the shipwreck she learned your name and residence, and your father's name, and she has since instituted inquiries which have resulted in the most favourable accounts of you."

"I remember her asking me some questions about my home, etc., when we were on the schooner—and again after we reached shore."

"We heard contradictory accounts of your father's pecuniary condition, one making him wealthy, and another insolvent, and although Mrs. Blenheim had determined to give this property to you in either event I believe it was a real satisfaction to her, yesterday, when I told her that you were poor."

"Well, she is a noble woman, and I hope I shall soon be able to make my acknowledgments to her in person. I shall call daily until she is able to see me."

"Ah, if you were but in the house as your home I am sure the consciousness of that fact would itself have a happy effect upon her health. It would counteract some adverse influences—and—and—she has so looked forward to it—she prepared your room with her own hands a week ago. Then there would surely be some hour in the twenty-four when she could

see you, whereas you might make a daily call for weeks without finding her well enough for an interview. Think of it. You would be quite master of the house, you know."

"Why—why," said Frederick. "I'll certainly come, if it is her wish, and stay until she gets well. After that let circumstances decide; but she need never fear but that I shall find my happiness in consulting her wishes."

"Spoken like an oracle. I shall then tell her you will come to-morrow."

"You may."

"Good-bye then—for my time is up."

So they parted, and Rashleigh went forth into the streets and walked aimlessly about for a while relieved to find himself alone and at leisure to contemplate his changed fortunes, of the certainty of which he could no longer entertain a reasonable doubt.

Then he went home—he rode this time, that he might the sooner communicate the good news to his father, who had again fallen off from his confident mood and whom he found impatiently walking the floor with a countenance expressive of anything but hope.

"All wrong, Fred?" he asked, quickly, as his son entered the room.

"No, sir—all right, and a great deal better than we guessed," replied the young man, shaking hands congratulatingly with his father. "We'll drop the Custom House and the bank too in less than a week—perhaps in a few days. Sit down, and I'll tell you all about it. What should you think of twenty thousand pounds now?"

"Twenty thousand! Impossible, Fred! You do not mean it!"

"Oh, yes, I do mean it, and more too."

"But—but have you any of it in hand?"

"N—no."

"Ah—then the bird is in the bush yet, Fred?"

"Why—yes—of course. Where should it be? But you'll see it will be all right. I know it's all right unless I am out of my senses, and Alice Winslow out of hers. That girl is the soul of goodness and truth, and she is wide-awake."

"I hope it will prove so."

They discussed the subject until late that night, and when they retired to rest it was with little or no fear that their new hopes would again be dashed.

#### CHAPTER XXXIV.

THEIR hopes were not dashed. Frederick obtained a week's holiday from the bank—for his father had insisted that he should not resign his situation there while any uncertainty rested upon his new prospects—and before it had elapsed everything had been made sure.

Mrs. Blenheim had improved rapidly, the gratification of her long-indulged wishes having had the most beneficial effect upon her, although, as we have seen, the excitement produced by Rashleigh's sudden arrival had in the first place proved detrimental.

On the second day after Fred had taken up his quarters at her house she came downstairs to welcome him, and although the associations awakened by his presence overpowered her for awhile she rallied and became very cheerful, and seemed only solicitous lest her protégé should consider himself but transiently fixed in his new quarters.

She seemed to be afraid that he would take flight and carry away with him her new-found happiness.

When he spoke of his business and of his week's exemption from it she said:

"Ah, yes; we will see about that to-morrow or next day."

On the next morning Mrs. Blenheim's lawyer was sent for, and she was in consultation with him for half an hour, after which the legal gentleman had a very brief interview with Fred, in which, however, he only asked the young man if he was of age, and desired the favour of his full name written on a slip of paper.

On the next day the lawyer came again, and in his presence, and in that of old Winslow, whom Mrs. Blenheim had insisted on being a witness to the proceeding, she signed, sealed and delivered a deed of transfer which comprised—the questioned lawyer said—everything which would have belonged to Frank Blenheim, by his late father's will, on attaining his majority.

There were ten thousand pounds in addition to a large estate estimated at not less than seven thousand pounds, and rising in value year by year.

When the document was perfected and the title had been irrevocably transferred the lawyer congratulated the new owner. Mrs. Blenheim and Alice did the same, and even old Winslow extended his shrivelled but jewelled fingers to the young proprietor, which the latter, in the plenitude of his good nature, received cordially for Alice's sake.

But Rashleigh had little thought at that moment

except for his benefactress, who had thus enriched him without imposing a single condition or trammel upon him.

"If I am not too old, dear madam," he said, "I beg that you will henceforth allow me to call you 'mother.'"

"Let it be so, my son," replied the lady, smiling, yet in tears; "you are but a few years the senior of dear Frank, and your name and nature are both near enough to his to warrant such a transfer of the filial title. Mother and son we will be to each other henceforth, if your real mother will allow me thus to trespass on her sacred rights."

"Surely she will respect your claims to my love and duty—she to whom you to-day restore a home and a husband—nor will she ever fear any diminution of my affection for her. She knows me too well for that."

"And I am to be your cousin now, Mister Fred," said Alice. "Remember that, and let me hear no more of Miss Winslow from you."

"Agreed, with all my heart," replied the young man, and he fully expected next to hear her father claiming to be his beloved uncle; but the latter only smiled and nodded, and agreed with everybody without saying much, except to suggest to his sister that as they all seemed very happy the occasion might be a fitting one for bringing on a little material refection; or, in other words, a little cake and wine.

She thanked him for the suggestion, and it was ordered of course, and the old youth, growing genial under the influence of his fourth glass, told Rashleigh that he was proud of him and would introduce him to his club, and in a lower voice he added, pointing his remark with his diamond finger:

"I say; I was deucedly mistaken about my sister. She is all right in the upper story, after all—and I am g-glad of it. As to what I said before, mum's the word you know. Eh?"

"Oh, yes. I'll promise that," replied Fred, laughing.

"G-good fellow! Good fellow! Shake hands!"

They shook hands, and then the young man escaped from the old pop to the more genial companionship of his real friends.

On the next day he resigned his post in the bank, greatly to the surprise of Mr. Dumont, who in rather a cross mood asked him if he had found something better to do.

Fred said he thought he had, but he did not then explain matters to his uncle, who was not particularly entitled to his confidence, and did not indeed invite it, for he was always very busy in bank hours, and so trifling a matter as a change in a small clerkship was of little consequence to him.

He muttered something about "fickle fellows who did not know their own minds," and who, he said, never came to any good; and Rashleigh, who stood somewhat on his dignity, now came off and left him still grumbling.

A few evenings afterwards, when old Rupert called to bid his relations farewell, and to announce that he also had given up his situation and was going home, the banker's astonishment was beyond expression, and he seemed to feel himself decidedly aggrieved.

He appeared to be impressed with the idea that in some way both father and son were indebted to him for their places, which he thought ought not to have been surrendered without consulting him.

"What does it all mean?" he sneeringly asked. "Are you both mad, or have you drawn a prize in a lottery?"

"Neither," replied Rupert, good-naturedly; "but Fred has become rich, and he is going to buy our old home again."

"Rich? How has he become rich?" asked Dumont, crossly. "On paper?"

"No; rich in hard cash and real estate—richer than even you, David, I believe," returned Mr. Rashleigh, who knew that his sordid brother-in-law had met with some very heavy losses during the past year, and was now scarcely accounted a rich man.

"How? How has it been done? Fortunes are not usually made in a day, although they are sometimes lost in less time."

"I know that."

"How then? How did he get it?"

"Honourably—most honourably. As to the particulars you had better ask him. He might prefer that I should not tell all his affairs."

"Oh, all right. I am very glad to hear that he has done so well."

But Dumont did not look glad, although his good wife did, and she expressed her joy in a way that could not be mistaken.

"So you are really to have the old place back again and everything just as it was before?" she asked.

"Exactly the same, Fred says. It went for a very low sum, and I know it is for sale now at no great advance on the auction price. I have in my pocket

more than sufficient to pay for it, with the furniture and all, and to set the wheels going again."

"Oh, I am so glad," exclaimed Mrs. Dumont. "Isn't it wonderful?"

"Yes, it is indeed."

"It's first rate," added Dumont, with a suddenly changed air. "We'll come and see you next summer."

"Do so. We shall be very glad to have a visit from you, I am sure."

"And tell Frederick to come and see us. He is always welcome here. We have always thought a great deal of Fred—a very great deal. It was a pleasure to me to give him his place in the bank—and he would soon have been promoted, too, if he had stayed. I had him in mind, sir; but I am glad he does not need it. It is a great satisfaction to see our young friends rise after we have given them a little lift. Isn't it?"

"Oh, yes, of course."

"That it is. Tell him to come and see us soon and often. You have been rather remiss yourself, Rupert, and I wish you could come and dine with us again before you go."

Rupert declined.

He was going on the second ensuing day and would be very busy. Besides, he remembered some dinners of which he had partaken there, during which he had been made to feel that he was a poor relation.

On the next day he went with Frederick by appointment to see Mrs. Blenheim, who continued to improve in health and spirits.

The interview was in all respects most pleasant and satisfactory to both parties, but of its details it is not necessary here to speak.

What was Frederick Rashleigh going to do with himself in his new position of an independent gentleman?

He did not yet know, farther than pertained to that initiatory step which he had already taken to secure the happiness of his parents and sister.

He did not mean to be an idler in the great working world, nor was he quite willing, even for a short time, to fall into indolent and slothful habits; but for the present he knew nothing better to do, beside bestowing on his benefactors as much of his time and attention as could be made acceptable to her, than to enjoy the fortune which seemed to be forced upon him.

It should not be for many months. In the coming summer, if his new mother's health were restored and she had no especial claims upon his time, he would resume his college course, which lacked about a year of its completion.

But Mrs. Blenheim talked of foreign travel, and Fred had gladly agreed to make the tour with her whenever she desired to go.

His collegiate studies could be postponed, and finished after his return. What did it matter to a man of fortune in only his twenty-second year? Many a man had been graduated later, and been all the more finished scholar for the delay.

So Frederick enjoyed his "elegant leisure" for a while in all such ways as were compatible with his position, and with the mourning apparel, which with good taste and kindly feeling he had assumed for Frank.

This act had been unprompted—it was not spoken of—but it added another and a strong link to the chain of kindly deeds and words by which he had attached and endeared himself to the bereaved mother.

"There never was another like him except Frank himself," she said, enthusiastically, to Alice. "Heaven has certainly sent him to me to fill—nay, that can never be—but to partly fill the aching void in my heart."

But we know that poor Fred had an "aching void" also, of which as yet his new friends knew nothing, and however inviting was the career which had been opened to him it did not long divert his mind from its old griefs. Sometimes indeed it even aggravated them, for he reflected that if Ada were now free he as a man of fortune might honourably seek her hand whether her father were rich or poor.

But Mrs. Blenheim was not long to remain in ignorance of his most secret thoughts, for she watched his moods with a jealous fear that he was not happy or contented in his new position; and she had been quite sincere when she wrote to him that he could have no aim or interest in life which should not be as dear to herself as to him.

It must be remembered too that she knew something of Ada, for she had seen her several times in the steambath, before the disaster, in company with Rashleigh, and she retained a very distinct recollection of her grace and beauty.

She knew neither of them then, but during the few hours which she had spent in the schooner in company with her rescuer she had made some inquiries

about the lady, and learned that she was only a travelling acquaintance of Fred's, yet one for whose safety he felt no little solicitude.

It was natural that Mrs. Blenheim in reviewing the events of the shipwreck with her young friend should remember and inquire after the fate of this lady, and there was something in Frederick's looks and manner in replying which awakened her suspicions that his regard for Miss Argyle was more than friendship.

(To be continued.)

## SCIENCE.

**COPPER IN COCOA AND CHOCOLATE.**—Careful chemical analyses show that cocoa and chocolate always contain a small percentage of copper. The husks of the cocoa have been found to contain as high as 0.025 per cent. of copper, while the kernel of the bean only contained 0.004. Samples of chocolate contained 0.0125 of copper. Substances containing copper, even in the smallest proportions, cannot be very desirable for the diet of invalids, for which the above articles are quite extensively used.

**PAPER CAB WHEELS.**—The latest novelty from the United States is paper cab wheels. The tire is of steel, and when turned up ready for the filling it is made taper inside so that the inside diameter on the flange is  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. smaller than on the other. The body of the wheel is a paper block made of strawboard cut into circles, 30 in. in diameter, pasted together with ordinary paste, and consolidated under a hydraulic pressure of about 300 tons. This block, after being slowly dried for nearly two weeks in a dry-house, is turned and fitted in a common pattern lathe.

**ARTIFICIAL WATER LIME.**—It has been long known to chemists that water lime consists substantially of quick lime, burnt clay, and a small portion of the oxides of iron and magnesia, but scarcely any effort has been made to utilize this knowledge. All yellow or red clays contain iron, and most specimens of lime in use contain the required magnesia. If burnt clay or brick dust in the fine powder be mixed with an equal weight of fresh slacked lime, and twice this weight of clean sharp sand be added, a compound will be formed which will harden under water equal to the best hydraulic cement.

**GERMINATION—ITS RELATION TO LIGHT.**—The theory of the germination of plants which has been heretofore admitted requires that the germinating seed be excluded from direct sunlight. Late experiments appear to establish the fact that, while exclusion from the luminous rays of the solar spectrum is necessary to the healthy germination of seeds, yet the chemical or actinic rays are indispensable to that process. These penetrate much deeper into the soil than do the luminous rays. The exclusion of the chemical rays, and not the absence of oxygen alone, is assumed to be the cause of seeds failing to grow when buried too deep in the earth.

**TO PURIFY WATER.**—Chloride of iron and carbonate of soda, in the proportion of 32 kilos. of the former salt and 8.5 of the latter to a quantity of water equal to 1,000 cubic metres, has been found a most valuable and quite innocuous means of purifying water, even such as is otherwise quite unfit for drinking purposes, and could not be rendered fit by alum. The salts alluded to are best previously dissolved in some pure water, and the solutions, that of iron first, poured into the tank containing the water intended to be operated upon. The soda solution is not added until after a few moments, the water being first vigorously stirred. The soda solution having been added, the fluid is stirred again, and then left quiet for the purpose of allowing the very bulky and flocculent sediment to deposit; this takes considerable time—from twenty-four to thirty-six hours. The *strychnos potatorum* is used in India for purifying clayey water.

**OCEAN CURRENTS.**—An interesting discovery has lately been made, which throws some light upon the course and rapidity of the great ocean currents circulating between the continent of South America and the western coast of Australia. The figure-head of a large ship was picked up some time ago at the little island of Rottneest, near Fremantle, Western Australia, and has since been identified as having belonged to the "Blue Jacket"—a wool-ship which was lost between the Falkland Islands and Cape Horn, on her voyage from New Zealand to England. The "Blue Jacket" was burned on the 9th of March, 1869, in about 63 deg. south latitude, and 60 deg. west longitude, and the distance from that point to Rottneest Island is therefore over 6,000 miles. The time occupied in traversing this distance was about two years and a half, giving a mean rate of about six miles and a half a day.

**PARCHMENT PAPER.**—It has long been known that certain acids exercised a wonderful effect upon woody fibre. Early in

the year 1857 Mr. Gaines described before the Royal Institution a method practised by him of making artificial parchment. His process consisted in the mixing together of two parts of sulphuric acid and one of water, and after it had become cool immersing in it, for about one second, blotting or unsized paper, immediately washing it in several changes of water, after which it was allowed to dry spontaneously. This treatment conferred upon it new properties. No longer weak, it was now tough and strong, semi-transparent, and resembled parchment, being capable of use for the same purpose.

This treatment causes the lignin to undergo no chemical change. The weight is the same as before, and there is no indication of the presence of the acid. The paper no longer permits water to pass through it; it is, in fact, waterproof. Paper, however, is not the only form in which the lignin may be submitted to the action of the acid, for textile fabrics, such as calico, are affected in a similar manner and rendered tough in an extraordinary degree. Fishing nets, and fabrics of that kind, may also have their strength increased many degrees by the same cause.

Another method is to dip white unsized blotting paper for half a minute in strong sulphuric acid, sp. gr. 1.842, and afterwards in water containing a little ammonia. Another method is to plunge unsized paper for a few seconds into sulphuric acid diluted with a half to a quarter of its bulk of water, the solution being allowed to cool down to the temperature of the air before being used, and afterwards washing in water containing ammonia.

We may here state that as blotting paper alone must be used for this process of conversion common paper may in turn be converted into blotting paper by immersing it for a few seconds in hydrochloric acid. Some recommend for this purpose a mixture of hydrochloric acid and water; but, in the experiments that others have tried in this direction, they have immersed the paper in a bath of the ordinary undiluted acid, removing it, after a few seconds, to a vessel of water in which it was treated to several changes.

## UMBRELLAS.

In England there is no mystery attaching to the umbrella. We have borrowed the word and the article itself from Italy, altering both in some slight degree, in order to naturalize them more effectually. Thus we say "umbrella," instead of "ombrello," and we apply the word exclusively to a portable defence against rain or snow, whereas in Italy it occupies much more the place which we have assigned to what we designate the parasol.

The Germans, by the way, are far more happy in word-building than we are. Instead of borrowing the words from two distinct languages, as we have done, they make use of the very intelligible compounds, "Regenschirm" (rain-screen), and "Sonnenschirm" (sun-screen), to signify the two closely allied articles.

But, after all, there is something to be said in favour of the English method of constructing a language, for, as in the case before us, with us words very often contain within themselves their own history. "Umbrella" suggests at once the source from which it came; and if we look in one of the most curious books in our language—"Coryate's Crudities" hastily gobbled up in Five Months' Travel" (1611)—we shall find one of the earliest references to the article. After describing other things which he observed in Italy he goes on to say:

"Many of them doe carry fine things that will cost at least a duckat, which they commonly call in the Italian tongue ombrellios—that is, things that minister shadow unto them for shelter against the scorching heats of the sunne. These are made of leather, something answerable to the forme of a little canopy and hooped in the inside with divers little wooden hoops that extend the umbrella in a pretty large compass. They are used especially by horsemen, who carry them in their hands when they ride, fastening the end of the handle upon one of their thighs, and they impart so large a shadow unto them that it keepeth the heats of the sunne from the upper parts of their bodies."

It will be observed that the only use to which umbrellas were put at this date was for defence against the rays of the sun, and their adaptation to other purposes was certainly much more recent. Throughout the English literature of the seventeenth century there are to be found occasional references to umbrellas, but they were evidently by no means common, and of dimensions which forbade their general employment. Thus they seem at first to have been kept at taverns, coffee-houses, and in the halls of great houses for the convenience of persons passing from the house-door to their carriages.

In the "Famale Tatler" for December 12, 1709, there is the following advertisement:

"The young gentleman borrowing the umbrella



belonging to Will's Coffee-house in Cornhill is hereby advertised that to be dry from head to foot in the like occasion he shall be welcome to the maid's patents."

There is a covert sneer in these remarks at the effeminacy of carrying an umbrella, and it must be allowed that it ill-matched the sword which every gentleman of fashion then wore. But of course such arguments would not apply to the gentler sex, by the members of which the utility of the invention was first recognized.

The first man who was bold enough to carry an umbrella in the open streets of London was Jonas Hanway, the philanthropist, and we can imagine the insults and annoyances to which he must have been exposed. The street-boys of London were not better behaved in 1750 than they are now, and it will take many years' operation of the compulsory clauses of the Education Act to convert them into polite members of society. Hanway, however, persevered in the use of the obnoxious article, and at length a few other strong-minded persons ventured to follow his example. In spite of the opposition of the hackney-coachmen and chairmen, who regarded the invention as a formidable rival, it established its claim to general favour, and in the year 1780 umbrella-making had become a great trade in London.

## MYSTERY OF THE HAUNTED GRANGE.

### CHAPTER LII.

THE afternoon of the twenty-first of August came at last—the day preceding that upon which Guy Earls-court was to appear at the preliminary examination before a police-magistrate, previous to his committing to stand his trial for the wilful murder of Alice Warren.

It was a very warm day, an intensely warm day down among the cornfields and golden country meadows, and insufferably hot in London.

The atmosphere of the prison-cell was stifling. Guy's long limbs were stretched out upon the bed. He lay in his shirt sleeves, his collar loosened, almost painfully oppressed for air. He had spent nearly a month in prison, and looked, as he very well might after such an ordeal, pale and worn and thin.

The sensation the whole affair had created was absolutely something unprecedented. Guy Earls-court, the ex-guardman, the wealthy and popular author, the brother of Lord Montalien, to stand his trial for the murder of a peasant girl.

The best metropolitan society was thrilled. It was something new under the sun, something to stir and excite even their languid pulses. All his evil deeds of the past, forgotten in the sunshine of prosperity, were raked up again; stories were afloat of him fit to make your hair rise; people recalled the sinister expression about his mouth and the darkly evil glance of his brown eyes. He had Italian blood in his veins too, known to be revengeful, murderous blood from time immemorial. His portrait sold like wildfire, and new editions of his books were ordered as fast as they could be issued. If Mr. Earls-court had written a second "Hamlet" or "Childe Harold" he would not have found himself so famous.

He smiled in the solitude of his prison as he read and heard all this. It was the way of the world. He had expected nothing else; he knew that the public would be grievously disappointed if he were not condemned. It is not given to us every day to witness such a sensational romance of real life—a prospective peer and celebrated author is not every day sent to Newgate like a common felon.

It was really wonderful how his friends fell off—it would have been a little melancholy too, if Guy had not been a philosopher and reader of poor, weak human nature.

A few friends were faithful in the dark hour—the Atherlys, Robert Lisle, Captain Villiers, Allan Fane. Lady Edith Clive sent him a note, a passionate, vehement, girlish outburst of hearty nature. She knew he was innocent; though all the world believed in his guilt, she never would—never, never!

He smiled a little sadly as he read it, then, wanting a pipe light half an hour after, I am afraid Lady Edith's note was twisted up to serve the purpose.

He was neither miserable nor indifferent to his danger and his ruin. He saw clearly how strongly circumstances told against him, and his own inability to clear himself. He felt, with horror unutterable, that his brother was the guilty man.

Great Heaven! what a double-dyed villain he was to lure away an innocent, trusting girl, and then, when weary of her, foully murder her. He was horrified when he thought of it. Lord Montalien had not been present at the inquest, but Guy knew that he was one of the new witnesses to be examined on the morrow.

Most faithful of all his friends and visitors had

been Robert Lisle. He had never missed a day. His father, had he been alive, could scarcely have felt more bitter pain for Guy than he did. His own private troubles were lessening—his daughter long ago had been pronounced out of danger—had been able to sit up during the past nine days. But he could not leave England while his young friend's fate remained undecided.

He was with him this sultry August afternoon, walking slowly to and fro, always his wont when deeply moved. They had been talking of indifferent things, of the new book Guy had begun in prison—he always avoided talking of his trial, if possible—but Lisle's moody brow showed that his thoughts were of it now.

"I ask you once again, Guy, if you do not mean to throw aside this mad reticence, and vindicate your innocence as you can—as I know you can? You have engaged excellent counsel, but we don't want his eloquence—we do want a plain, straightforward statement of facts as regards your doings on the morning of the 24th of December. When an accused man refuses to account for his conduct with a strong *prima facie* case made out against him the law is justified in believing that his silence arises from guilty or sinister motives. The evidence against you is purely circumstantial, and erroneous of course, but men have been hanged before now on purely circumstantial and erroneous evidence."

"They won't hang me," said Guy, shaking up his pillows so as to get the cool side out; "at least I hope not. The evidence, as I said before, that suffices for a coroner or a police magistrate won't always stand the test of a grand jury. It will be unpleasant to be committed to Newgate until the assizes, but—well, the world is full of unpleasant things, and I suppose I must come in for my share. An *alibi* I cannot prove—it is, as I told you before, simply impossible. If my innocence be established it will be by the breaking of this chain of evidence they have so skilfully wrought against me—not by any revelation of my own. Don't let us talk about it any more, dear Lisle, it's much too hot to discuss unpleasant subjects. How are they all at Speckhaven to-day?"

"Much as usual."

"Miss Lisle continues steadily to improve, I trust?"

With some hesitation he said this.

"Paulina does not improve," her father answered, gloomily; "not, at least, as she should. The apathetic state of low spirits to which she fell a victim before her illness has seized upon her again. She does not rally because she is indifferent on the subject. The doctors can do nothing—they speak of hidden trouble—something preying on her mind—advise change of scene, air, and climate—the old stereotyped medical formula. And this trouble, if there is a hidden trouble, is a subject on which nothing will induce her to speak."

Guy's face was much graver now than when discussing his own danger.

"You should follow their advice," he said. "You should take her away. I suppose they will want you here to-morrow, but after that why not start at once? You can give bonds for your reappearance when needed again. Take her abroad, and immediately—her health is much too precious to be trifled with longer. She does not—I hope she does not know of my affair? For the sake of past times, when we were good friends, I should not like her to know I am even suspected of the murder of her friend. You have not told her?"

"Most certainly not—all exciting topics are forbidden. Strange to say, she has made no inquiries whatever on the subject of her dead friend since her recovery. The apathy that holds her seems to blot out feeling and memory. She never reads, she sees no visitors, and we tell her nothing."

Guy drew a long breath—a breath of relief.

"I am glad that—take her out of England in ignorance if you can; and whatever happens keep her in ignorance. Let her never learn this if it be in your power to prevent it. I could not quite bear that. I may tell you now," he continued, after a brief pause, "what I would not tell you out there in Virginia—I love Paulina with a love as devoted as it is hopeless. Alice Warren was to her as a sister; I cannot endure that she should think that I was suspected of her murder. Promise me, old friend," he held out his hand as he spoke, "that you will do this, the greatest, perhaps the last favour I shall ask. Promise!"

"I promise," Lisle answered, wringing the young man's hand, "to keep her in ignorance while I can. Sooner or later she must learn the truth in spite of us."

"Of course; but until the matter has been quite decided keep her in total ignorance. Take her abroad, amuse her, let her regain her health—she would recover none the sooner for knowing this."

At ten o'clock next morning the prisoner was

taken into court. The crowd was unprecedented—many of those who had fled from London the second week of July, as though it was pest-stricken, had returned to witness the trial of Guy Earls-court. He bowed and smiled to the many faces he knew as he took his place in the dock. Mr. Carson, a very able lawyer, had been retained on the part of the prisoner. Mr. Harding was to conduct the prosecution.

Mr. Harding rose on behalf of the crown to address the bench and lay before them the facts of the case. His address was lengthy, and told forcibly against the prisoner. He summed up the evidence laid before the coroner in an overwhelming mass, and proceeded to summon the witnesses. All the more important ones who had previously appeared were again brought forward, and among the new ones Mr. Allan Fane was first called.

Mr. Fane had very little light to throw upon the case one way or another. Had seen prisoner in company with Miss Warren many times—both in the September of her flight and other years during his summer visits to Montalien Priory. Had never thought Mr. Earls-court a lover of hers; had not known him to pay any more attention to her than the other gentlemen did stopping at the Priory. Knew that he went up to London one evening late in September; could not remember the date. Heard next day that Miss Warren was missing, and had gone with him. Was surprised at the news; did not credit it. Believed Mr. Earls-court's own statement that he had met her by accident at the station. Was convinced the prisoner was quite incapable either of inducing elopement or committing murder. Knew that his reputation had not been stainless in the past, but his guilt had been the common follies of youth, never crimes.

A profound sensation ran through the court at the name of the next witness.

It was Francis, Baron Montalien, the prisoner's brother.

He came forward, dressed in black, his face deathly pale, an ominous blue circle surrounding his mouth and eyes, looking unspeakably ill. He shrank away from the dock; his voice when he spoke was almost inaudible from agitation—the natural agitation of an upright man in seeing his only brother placed in so dreadful a position was with one exception the universal impression.

Lord Montalien was sworn. The prisoner was his brother. Had known Alice Warren off and on for many years. Had always had the highest respect for her personally, and for the whole family. Had never heard her lightly spoken of. Visited the cottage very often when passing; rarely went there purposely. Had often met his brother there, and had seen him walking with Miss Warren. Had frequently joked with him about his attentions to the bailiff's pretty daughter, but had never considered them serious. Was aware of his brother's intention of going up to London on the evening of the 27th, but knew nothing of the girl's flight until next day. Was surprised and shocked when informed they had fled together. Went up to town himself next day on purpose to remonstrate with his brother, but did not succeed in seeing him then, or for many weeks after.

Yes; another of his guests, Augustus Stedman, had also left the Priory for London about the same time, on the same day—or the day before his brother—could not remember which. Mr. Stedman had not returned—was out in Australia at present. Sir Harry Gordon was in India.

His brother, Mr. Fane, and Captain Villiers were the only other friends staying with him that year. He had remained in London for a week or more on the occasion of his coming up, then returned for a few days to Lincolnshire.

Had never seen Alice Warren after her flight. Yes; his brother had called upon him at his lodgings before his departure for America. It was Christmas week, not Christmas Eve—two or three days before Christmas. They had talked of his departure and of Miss Earls-court's will, which had disinherited him. Had not paid his brother's debts. Miss Earls-court had done it. Had often advised him for his good. Had spoken to him more than once on the subject of Alice Warren, but had always been rebuffed.

Lord Montalien was cross-examined, and allowed to stand down. His emotion had been very great. Profound sympathy for his delicate health and deep sorrow was felt through the court. His face was quite ghastly as he left the box, and his hand was pressed convulsively in the region of his heart. Guy's dark eyes followed him; his handsome face set and stern. He had listened to his deliberate perjury; and if any doubt of his guilt had lingered in his mind it was dispelled in that hour.

Captain Cecil Villiers came next, and the guardman, with every wish to serve his friend, every belief in his innocence, did more to blacken his case and hang him than all the rest.

Had known Alice Warren, and admired her—always admired pretty girls, whether peasants or princesses.



[AN UNEXPECTED WITNESS.]

Was not aware of Guy Earls court being her lover—never had thought him such. Had “chaffed” him on the subject of the flight once or twice, and believed what had been told him, that the meeting at the railway was merest chance.

Mr. Earls court had remained at his lodgings for two days previous to his departure from England. He had been absent on duty nearly all of the 23rd of September—found the prisoner alone in his chambers upon his return late at night. They had sat together smoking and talking for a couple of hours—his friend seemed thoughtful and out of spirits.

Once, when talking of his past reckless career, Guy had burst out laughing, and exclaimed:

“Cecil, old fellow, what would you say if I told you I was about to close my mad career by the crowning madness of all to-morrow?”

Had laughed again, and refused to say more—had taken his candle and had gone to bed.

Awakening next morning about daylight, he had seen Guy in the room adjoining, dressing himself by candle light. Had called, and asked him what the deuce he meant by getting up in the middle of the night.

The prisoner had answered it was half-past seven o'clock, and that he had a pressing engagement at eight.

“There is a lady in the case, Villiers,” he said; “and ladies brook no delay.”

“I fell asleep again, and did not wake until after nine. My servant came with hot water, and I asked him what time it was, and if Mr. Earls court had come back yet. He said it was half-past nine, and Mr. Earls court had not returned.

“Earls court came in while we were speaking, covered with snow. He told us he had been riding outside in the snowstorm, and was tremendously hungry. We breakfasted together. He made no farther reference to his engagement of the morning. At a little before eleven he left for the house of a friend—Sir Vane Charteris—to bid the family goodbye. Two hours later I saw him depart by the noon train for Southampton.”

While Captain Villiers was having all this reluctantly extorted from him a messenger had made his way to Mr. Carson, and placed a note in his hand. It was of some length and of evident importance—the face of the lawyer flushed up with surprise and delight as he read it. It was the middle of the afternoon, and the court must speedily adjourn.

Samuel Watters, the servant spoken of by Captain Villiers, was the last witness for the prosecution called, and he corroborated his master's statement concerning Mr. Earls court's actions upon that morning,

his calling the cab for him, and the hour of his departure and return.

With his evidence the case for the prosecution closed; then Mr. Carson arose with the pleasant profectory remark that his address would be a brief one.

He did not, he said, rise to assert that his client was guiltless of this horrible crime laid to his charge—that was to be presumed until the evidence had proved him guilty.

That the evidence just heard had done so he, Mr. Carson, denied. It was from first to last circumstantial, and improbable in the extreme.

He could cite scores of occasions where innocent men had been condemned on far more conclusive circumstantial evidence than this, their innocence discovered only when too late.

Mr. Earls court met this unhappy girl at the station, and accompanied her up to London. She was a stranger—in the great city for the first time—tired and frightened, and requested him, as a friend and protector in whom she placed every confidence, to see her safely to her destination. He did so at once, using no disguise before the landlady—making no attempt at concealment.

On the occasion of his second visit—some weeks later—he did the same, going openly and in broad day. Was that the conduct of that other man who visited his victim, like the criminal he was, disguised and after dark?

“What evidence has been offered here to prove that my client and this disguised man are one and the same?” Mr. Carson went on.

Then he grew eloquent, and showed distinctly the weakness of this part of the evidence. That they were not one and the same he was clearly prepared to prove.

Mr. Earls court had left the lodgings of Captain Villiers at eight o'clock, or a little before, on the morning of the 24th of December, 1862.

He had told Captain Villiers “there was a lady in the case.” He told him the truth; but that that lady was not the murdered girl he was prepared to show the court—that his client had been from a few minutes past eight until nine—the time when the murder was committed at Battersea—in company of this lady and her maid in the city of London. A sense of loyalty to that lady had held his client silent with a noble generosity at the peril of his own life. With a generosity equal to his own that lady had now come forward to triumphantly vindicate his honour and his innocence. Illness had prevented her hearing of Mr. Earls court's arrest at an earlier day—yesterday she had discovered it in her home miles away.

To-day she was—here!

A murmur thrilled through the death-like silence of the crowded court. The face of the prisoner had flushed crimson to the temples, then faded away, leaving him ghastly pale.

The door of the witness-box opened, and a lady stood there robed in dark silk, tall, elegant, veiled. Every creature in the crowded court leaned breathlessly forward—you might have heard a feather fall. She lifted one gloved hand and flung back her veil.

The rays of the August sun streaming in through the windows fell full upon her. A thrill, an irrepressible murmur, ran through the court at sight of that queenly grace, of that matchless loveliness. And four-hundred eager eyes fell and fixed on the proudly beautiful face of Paulina Lisle.

She was white as marble, white as death, as she faced the bench. Once, and once only, she looked at the prisoner. His face wore a strained, passionate look of appeal, as if even then he would entreat her silence. A smile, the sweetest, the gentlest she had ever given him, curved her lips—her eyes lit up—the old dauntless resolution was there in every line of that perfect face.

He dropped his own, and shaded his eyes with his hand. Until he stood up free he never raised his head again.

Mr. Carson leaned forward and blandly spoke.

To all the legal gentlemen present Miss Lisle was well known by reputation as the celebrated London beauty who only a few weeks ago had refused to marry the Marquis of Heatherland. The beautiful, the wealthy heiress and belle, stood here in a London police court to vindicate the innocence of a man suspected of murder!

“Your name, madam, if you please?”

She came a step forward.

For an instant the blood rose up bright in her pale face. Then, in that sweet, vibrating voice that had always been one of her chief charms, she said:

“I am called Paulina Lisle, but it is not my name. Wait until you have heard what I am here to say, you will then understand.”

There were scores present who knew her well, but with the exception of two not one of them understood what this meant. Even her father stood confounded.

Not her name!—what did she mean?

As the thought crossed his mind, as he looked at her wonderingly, the clear, sweet tones of her voice again were heard as she began her singular story.

(To be continued.)





[THE LOST FOUND.]

## THE LOST CORONET.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"One Sparkle of Gold," "Evelyn's Plot," &amp;c., &amp;c.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

The heath this night must be my bed,  
The bracken curtains for my head,  
My lullaby the warder's tread.  
To-morrow eve, more stillly laid,  
My couch may be my crimson'd plaid.

"PAULINE, my fair one, so I have met you again at last," exclaimed a well-remembered though yet not familiar voice as the young governess, wearied with the duties and excitements of a busy day, reclined in the sole easy-chair which her especial apartment could boast.

She sprang up indignantly, and faced the bold intruder with a princess mien that might have daunted a less determined and hardened offender than Otho Fitzurse.

"Captain Fitzurse, this is an unmanly insult. You know perfectly well that my apartments are forbidden to you or any guest of Lady Alice's. You are exposing me to cruel aspersions, perhaps worse, by this intrusion."

She waved her hand in dismissal, half involuntarily, as she spoke.

It was strange how in any such moment of alarm or outrage she unconsciously resumed the proud and dignified air of her former days. Yet, lowly born and depressed as she was, Otho could scarcely have believed that no noble stream flowed in those pure veins, no long line of ancestry inspired that graceful yet high spirit that sparkled in her flashing eyes and spoke in every gesture of her slight form.

"Don't be at all alarmed, my beautiful Pariah," he returned, quietly placing himself between the fireplace and the door, so as to cut off each means of communication. "My duenna aunt is safe in her room totally exhausted by her day's travels, and, as to the servants, they know better than to tell of anything I may choose to do. So you see there is no difficulty in the way of our having a pleasant little chat, if you will make yourself happy."

He would have taken her hand to impel her to a seat, but she eluded his touch and sprang away to a distant corner of the room.

"I certainly shall not leave it to menials to inform Lady Alice, unless you at once free me from your presence, sir," she said, haughtily. "It is necessary for my own self-defence and protection, and I shall at once claim her authority to prevent such insults to me, undefended as I am. I entreat—I insist upon

your ceasing this persecution, as a man—as a gentleman, if you profess to be one."

"Only the worst of it is you look so confoundedly lovely and graceful in your displeasure that you make it impossible for me to obey you. It is out of the question to believe that you were brought up to this kind of drudgery, and it is a burning shame to leave you to it," he replied, tauntingly.

"I do not repine. I complain of nothing but not being left in peace," she returned, impatiently. "Captain Fitzurse, must I expose myself to slander and loss of this refuge on your account?"

Again she darted towards the bell, from which he had moved in his anxiety to reach her side.

"Stop! only one moment!" he said, more seriously.

"I assure you on my honour that I will not remain—ay, and that I will not do or even look anything that might not befet the presence of a lady of my own rank. Only grant me a brief interview, one chance of speaking what I have to say."

"Then be quick. You can have nothing to say that Lady Alice or Julia must not hear," she said, doubtfully, glancing at the clock on the mantel-piece.

He laughed outright.

"So you are going to time me, fair lady," he said, mockingly. "I cannot quite stand that, though I shall be as expeditious as possible. As to the nature of my communication, it is not one that is usually made in public, especially before a dowager. The truth is I have fallen desperately in love with you. I know that there must be something queer for such a creature as you are to be drumming exorcises and verbs into a child's dull head, and it must not last. You need only say one word—look it, if you will—to command all that I can give you of happiness, and luxury, and love."

"Pray have you any idea what Lady Alice might think of such a proposal?" asked Pauline, scornfully.

There was such a look of utter contempt in her fair face that even he rather faltered in his reply.

"Oh, why, well, I don't see that it can be necessary to trouble ourselves about it. Old ladies don't know much about such matters. Not that Lady Alice is old—I don't suppose she is anything like forty. But we need not ask her you know. It will be enough for you to leave her, without giving any reason, and—"

Pauline stopped him by an impatient gesture.

"Captain Fitzurse, I will not degrade myself by even asking what is the nature of your proposal," she said, indignantly. "It can make no possible difference, since if you had a coronet to give, and it were at my feet, my reply would be the same. Never, not

under any imaginable circumstances would I accept it at your hands."

"Coronet! a likely thing indeed!" he retorted, angrily. "No, no; I grant you're pretty and graceful enough for such a rank, but it's rather strong to suppose I should even think of such a thing. A governess and a peeress are rather different persons, I can tell you, and so you would see if you were tried."

If she were tried—alas, poor Pauline! Had anyone ever been more sorely tested than herself by the reverses of fortune! The words conjured up such a flood of bitter memories that for the moment the present was forgotten.

She shivered involuntarily, and closed her eyes for a brief moment in sad retrospect of that happy time that appeared like a fairy dream in her present degradation.

He mistook the cause of that sudden emotion.

"There," he said, "I was sure you were too sensible not to see the truth when put before you. Believe me I will never fail you if you will trust me. I've been a bit of a rake in my day, but if you'll take me in hand you'll make quite a convert of me. I feel as if I should be different under your influence, though I cannot make a peeress of my aunt's governess you know. Come, you'll think better of it, won't you?"

Again he approached her, and would have dared to pass his arm lightly round her graceful form, but she impetuously dashed it from the profane contact.

"Back," she said, haughtily. "One moment more and I will bring aid, even if it cost me home and fame itself. Anything is better than such degrading insults."

He read the truth in her flushed, proud look, her agonized gesture, that spoke a world of wounded, outraged delicacy and pride.

"Come, come, Miss Lovett," he said, deprecatingly. "Believe me I am not quite so bad as I seem. I have a sincere wish to raise you out of your present unworthy position; and, if I had the rank and the means, be assured I should not hesitate where one like yourself was concerned. Won't you be friendly? won't you let me have one chance of retrieving my character?" he added, pleadingly.

"I have no right or wish to interfere in any way with your movements or plans, Captain Fitzurse," said Pauline, impatiently. "All I want is peace, and unless you leave the room immediately I certainly will take measures to obtain it."

A dark frown came over his face.

"Take care, proud girl!" he exclaimed, fiercely. "You are throwing away a lover, a protector, only to make an enemy. You have not so many friends, I

should think, as to give you a right to be so bumptious. Think once more. I warn you it is impossible now for you to escape my hate if you reject my love. I have not lived so long to be treated with contempt by a low-born dependent of my aunt's."

If he had desired to make his case utterly hopeless—to nerve the fragile girl against the utmost exertion of his power—he could not have taken a surer mode.

Her slight form seemed suddenly endued with the dignity of a princess as she replied:

"It is enough, sir. My decision is taken. Nothing can shake it. Alas! I expose you to the household?" she added, calmly, pointing to the door near which he stood.

A gust of rage swept over his features. Every fresh phase of Pauline's noble character gave her, even in his debased eyes, a new and irresistible charm. He had met with coquetry, with vanity and pique, with ambition and intrigue, in those whom he had courted either seriously or otherwise, during his *roué* life, but this girl had a calm dignity, a genuine repugnance to his suit, that made her ten thousand times more desirable to his wayward fancy. The difficulty of winning enhanced the value of the prize.

He lingered yet a moment, but a hasty gesture on her part warned him not to trifle with her longer, and, with a sarcastic bow, he softly opened the door and left the room, while Pauline, as she closed it hastily on her detested visitor, turned the key, and with a sensation of momentary relief sank on her knees and breathed a thanksgiving and a prayer to Him who was her sole friend and guardian in her dangerous path.

The morning dawned with a faint, chill gray that had little to allure in its dull gloom, and a light, capricious sleet fell at intervals from the curtained sky. There was little that was attractive in the outer world, little to draw any one from the warm shelter of couch and chamber one moment before it became imperative.

But Pauline, fevered, and weary of her long tossing night, from which sleep had been well nigh banished, rose some hour or more before even the domestics of the quiet dowager household were awake, and, wrapping herself in a warm cloak, and tying a veil over her pretty winter hat, she unfastened a side door and passed lightly and rapidly along the gravel walks till she arrived at a gate, which she knew was quite within her agile powers to surmount.

In a few seconds she had sprung over its bars, and stood in some doubt as to her next course. She had a secret longing to revisit the cottage where the strange friend of her dead mother dwelt. She felt instinctively that it might not be long before she would need her proffered aid. But a dread of the singular and afflicted being who had threatened her with his half-idiot caprice deterred her from that idea.

She started quickly on in the opposite direction, which led to a small but thickly planted fir-tree wood that had more than once excited her curiosity, though she had abstained from risking a visit to its dark recesses with the little charge committed to her care. She calculated that she could explore the spot and return to the house before any of its inhabitants were likely to be astir, and, as if to deaden mental anxiety by bodily exertion, she sprang on towards the spot.

It was some half-mile from the edge of the extensive grounds, and though she walked rapidly, before she reached it the partial obscurity of the early morning had quite given way under the influence of the rising sun.

The sleet nearly ceased, and Pauline threw back her veil, and gazed with curious interest on the scene, as she came to the entrance of the wood. The hard frost had gilded the branches of the trees with clear icicles, that gave a romantic variety to their dark lines.

The various paths were covered with dead leaves and shell-like cones, and the low ground ivy wound and clung round the trunks of the living and the stumps of the fallen and decayed trees.

Pauline passed on, carefully marking her way, and she pursued her course through the tortuous paths till she came to what appeared to her the very centre of the wood. There she stopped for a few moments doubtful whether to go on farther or to return on her steps.

But an object in the distance attracted her too powerfully for her to leave it unexamined. It was a small erection, scarcely rising more than six or eight feet above the ground, and had it not been for a faint column of smoke rising up from the top Pauline might have believed it to have been a freak of nature in the creation of deformed and moss-covered trees. As it was she determined to approach the romantic-looking little structure, as a more deliberate survey proved it to be.

Perhaps it was the home of some lone cottager who assisted the woodsman in guarding the sylvan retreat. With a light, cautious step she gained the neighbourhood of the tiny hut.

All was still as death; nothing save the thin vapour gave the slightest sign that it was inhabited.

Pauline paused and listened in vain for the slightest sound. Then she walked more boldly round to ascertain the mode of admitting either the tenant or the light of day to the singular little dwelling.

There was a narrow aperture, through which she could, with some difficulty, look into the interior of the hut. The space within was scarcely enough to contain its scanty furniture. A small table, a chair, a rough washstand, and a low pallet scarcely raised above a foot or so from the ground, filled up the miniature apartment.

It was a singular and certainly romantic scene. But it was not the peculiarity of the caprice which could choose so unattractive a dwelling that riveted Pauline's eyes and stopped the pulses of her heart.

On that lowly pallet lay a figure which could never have failed to send a thrill through her bosom and bring the blood to her delicate face. The dress of the occupant was plain and rustic as the woodsman peasant she expected to see in that small hut. His face was pale and haggard, and his closed eyes had circles round them which had never marked their full outline in other days. Above all his presence there was almost too incredible to be sought but a vision—a freak of fancy.

Yet no. Pauline was changed in all outer things, ay, and even the feelings and instincts of her pure nature were matured into almost marvellous development. But in one memory there could be no doubt, no change. The features, the very attitude of her former lover were indelibly engraved on her heart of heart.

She could not doubt—no, not for an instant—that Quentin Oliphant lay there, alone, and as she believed ill, helpless, perhaps dying before her.

Still she paused for a brief moment ere she entered the presence of him who had discarded her like a worthless, degraded thing from his heart. She had an instinctive terror of forcing herself on his notice, still more of appearing to court his regard by proffered service.

But even as she hesitated a deep, low sigh that spoke powerfully of some intense bodily or mental suffering came on her ears.

As if drawn by an irresistible magnet, she opened the latched door and glided into the hut. Once more she was in the presence of him she had loved so well; once more she gazed on the face which had formed the chief sunshine of her life. But if she was changed what had wrought this fearful difference in him? why was he, the nobly born and wealthy lover of Estelle, Countess of Mount Sorrell, in this lone hut, disguised, ill, suffering?

"Quentin, poor Quentin!" she breathed, in her soft, musical tones.

They were scarcely loud enough to have roused an infant, yet either the strange consciousness of human presence, or the fast-departing slumber of brief and restless terror, made the sleeper start and open his eyes in wild, questioning alarm. He fixed them on Pauline's fair face as if it had been a spirit, and raised himself half fiercely on his elbow.

"Go, go!" he said, "Why haunt me in my misery? It is enough—enough without your upbraiding."

He shivered, and turned again on his pillow to hide from his sight the supposed spectre of his accusing thoughts.

"Hush, dear Quentin! I have only come to help, to nurse you if I may," she said, soothingly, in terror for his wandering intellects. "Do you not know me—Pauline, whom once you thought you loved? What is the matter, dear Quentin? Are you ill? What has brought you to this wild spot?"

She touched his arm, as if to prove to him her actual presence—that it was no spirit who was haunting his solitude.

But he recoiled as if it were a burning iron instead of that small, soft hand which grasped him so gently.

"Off, off! Would you take me before my time? He is not dead yet. I am not a murderer till then! No, no! Leave me, leave me, or I shall go mad."

Pauline's blood was cold, but she still looked on the incoherent murmurs as the ravings of delirium, and strove to soothe the sufferer.

"It is all right, dear Quentin. Calm yourself. Look at me. Can you believe your Pauline would do aught that could harm you? Will you not trust her, even in her helplessness and her sadness?"

It would have been impossible not to believe her now. No one could simulate those sweet, truthful tones—no one could gaze at him with the deep, thoughtful eyes so incapable of deceit—save his once loved, his betrayed Pauline.

"Leave me, leave me," he murmured as the consciousness of his own guilt and unworthiness came like a scorching blast on his soul. "You do not know, you cannot even imagine my guilt."

"It would not chase me from you, alone and suffering as you are," she returned, sweetly. "I will never abandon you so long as I can do you service, dear Quentin. And perhaps you but exaggerate your guilt."

"No, no, no," he replied, eagerly. "Pauline, even in your eyes, with all that I have sinned against you, I must seem contemptible and base, but when I confess the rest—oh, it is impossible that you should not shrink from me with loathing!"

"I will not—I will not," she said, calmly. "Only tell me all; it may relieve your poor heart."

"You are an angel," he replied, fervently. "I was not worthy of you, and perhaps this is a fitting punishment for my offence against you, poor, stricken one. Pauline, what will you say when I tell you that my base treachery to you has been visited by the like conduct in her for whom I deserted your sweet injured self? Estelle never loved me. I can see it all now. It was but for pique and vanity that she tried to draw me from you; and when all was over, when rank and wealth were hers, she played with me till she drove me mad, and the rival she encouraged has fallen by my hand, and I am a fugitive from the consequences of my crime."

Pauline shuddered. Was blood ever to haunt her with its crimson stains, its ghastly guilt?

"Ah, I see you cannot pardon it. Go, leave me—I would rather be alone than see your disgust, your horror," he said, with melancholy impetuosity.

"Quentin, it is not for me to pardon, it is for the Almighty alone, and from my heart do I pray that He may be merciful to you," she returned, gently. "Perhaps even now it is not hopeless—he may not be dead," and the last word came low and half-inaudible on the air.

"I dare hardly hope it," he replied. "Oh, Pauline, how different it might have been with me had you been at my side like a guardian angel, if the past could have been forgotten, if that dreadful truth had not been revealed, then all this horror might have been averted."

"Hush," she said, calmly, "hush. I at least have no regrets. Quentin, if you would keep my regard, my interest in you, never speak of that more. It was all well. We were not suited for each other, or the love would have borne the test."

It was, perhaps, the severest stab that Quentin could have received.

There was no pique, no coquetry in those quiet words. He felt instinctively that all her love for him—such love as he had once possessed from that fair girl—had gone, vanished for ever.

He knew equally in his heart of heart that it was a treasure richer than all he had retained, and that Pauline still filled the holier, more gentle and sacred recesses of his heart.

"What can I do? What danger is most immediately threatening you?" she asked. "It is better to speak of such pressing matters rather than what is now past remedy. Dear Quentin, you may command me if you will tell me the whole truth."

"It is soon spoken," he said, mournfully. "I was exasperated, jealous, indignant, at Estelle's treachery and coquetry. I challenged the rival whom she preferred to me. Our dangers were, perhaps, equal, and our fates are equally pitiable. He is dead, or dying, and I am a fugitive and a murderer."

"No, no. There may be hope even yet," she said, sweetly. "Meantime, dear Quentin, till the truth is actually known are you safe? Cannot some better refuge be found for you? You might be discovered by some one else as well as by me."

He shook his head sadly.

"It is the best arrangement that can be made, it seems; and I have to lie here, like a fox in a trap, and sliver at every sound. It is punishment enough to spend days and nights thus."

The girl was lost in thought as he spoke. Various plans floated in her brain for the safety of him she still loved as a dear friend, as one surrounded by the halo of her first girlish passion.

"Listen!" she said, suddenly. "I am but a dependent in the house of another, and I dare not risk my name or reputation by concealing you under her roof; but I think I can trace out a spot where, with scarcely the possibility of being discovered, you might remain till you could escape to the coast. To-night I will come again, and bring you the result of my examination of the place I mean. You would not fear to trust yourself to me, dear Quentin?"

"No more than I would to an angel," he returned, fervently. "Anything to get rid of this frightful solitude. And you would be near me, dearest? You would not leave me? You would be my guardian spirit?"



She held up her finger warningly.

"Remember the conditions," she said. "But at present I cannot say absolutely what it is in my power to do. Wait quietly till the dawn to-morrow morning, and I will bring you surer tidings."

She held out her hand as she spoke, in token of farewell, and, quickly snatching it from his clasp, glided away from the hut.

It seemed dark and dreary to the fugitive when her fair figure disappeared.

For the first time he confessed that he was utterly unworthy of her whom he had discarded in her hour of need, and vowed reparation should he ever obtain the power of atoning for his cruel treachery.

And she, the fair creature who had spoken peace and consolation to her false lover, was speeding on like a gazelle to gain the house ere her absence could be remarked.

She looked fearfully around as she emerged from the wood, but no living being was apparently within ken, and, with renewed confidence, she hastened on till she was once more at the gate which formed one entrance into the grounds.

She climbed lightly to the top, and, without pausing to take breath, was about to spring from the bar when she felt herself suddenly caught in the arms of some one who had surely been waiting for her in crouching concealment, and the hissing words, "Ha, ha, my pretty prude, I find that your scruples don't apply in all cases, so I don't mean to be thrown over again," came like a demon's whisper, bearing in it a whole world of terror and misery to her heart.

Still, amidst her own alarm and shame and agony, the prevailing thought was of Quentin—Quentin's danger and despair were uppermost in her unselfish, devoted breast.

"Unhand me, Captain Fitzurse," she gasped, struggling violently in his strong hold. "If you knew the outrage of which you are guilty you would not, you dare not be so unjust."

By a desperate exertion of her delicate frame she broke from his grasp and fled away before he had time to regain his hold.

"This is capital sport," he said as he followed more slowly in her steps. "One would think she was a princess in disguise, and, upon my word, there is something very peculiar in the whole business. There's many a pretty, ay, and well-mannered girl in the middle, and for that matter lower classes also. But there's a stamp of high breeding about this proud little mix that I never saw except in my own rank, and I don't think I'm a bad judge," he added, with a little scornful laugh.

He hastened on till he was near the house, and the sound of the breakfast bell quickened yet more sharply his movements.

But as he came within sight of the breakfast-room, with its blazing fire lighting up the luxurious display of plate and china, and its rich crimson furniture, its delicate damask that formed the interior, he paused for a moment ere he joined the mistress of the scene, the still handsome Lady Alice.

"It won't do to risk all that in a tangent," he mused, "either for love or hate. I certainly would not make an idiot of myself, even though I am more fairly caught than I ever expected. And were I to peach on her, why, she might have some awkward story to tell that might leave a stain on Lady Alice's conscience about me. Besides, she'd be sent off like a shot, and I should lose a great deal of amusement, to say nothing of possible success. No, my policy is silence for the moment. Always time enough to speak if one knows how to hold one's tongue."

Captain Fitzurse joined his aunt at the breakfast table with as careless an air as if just appearing from a prolonged stroll.

"Ha, Otho!" she said, looking up from the heap of letters that lay on the table by her, "here are two or three epistles for you, and one with a most ominous black border and seal. I advise you not to open it till after breakfast," she added, trying to smile. "If I am not mistaken, it comes from some lawyer's office. Who knows but that it may announce your succession to some far-away relative or sponsor? There, be advised, whether for good or ill, fortify your nerves by Mocha and game pie before you learn your fate."

#### CHAPTER XXXV.

Yes, she too much indulged thy fond pursuit.  
She sowed the seeds, but Death has reaped the fruit.

And helped to plant the wound that laid thee low,  
And winged the shaft that quivered in his heart.

"PLEASE, my lady, you are wanted, Mrs. Lovett says," was the greeting that roused Estelle of Mont Sorrell from her troubled slumbers that had been part of the penalty she had paid of late for her heartless coquetry.

Louise had thrown perhaps unintentionally a deeper meaning into her tone than she intended, or it might

be that she suspected her summons would hardly be obeyed unless it was enforced by some such significance in its delivery.

The young countess raised herself hastily from her pillow.

"What is it, Louise? It is extraordinary for Ruth to waken me an hour before time, unless there's some very urgent cause to excuse it."

But as her eyes fell on the pale features of the maid her tongue somewhat faltered in its severe reproof. There was no mistaking the ominous tidings it conveyed.

"Speak, girl!" she said, sharply. "It is insolent to keep me in suspense. Where is Ruth? what does she want with me?"

"Mrs. Lovett is in the poor, dear marquis's room," said Louise, half sobbing. "She did not say, my lady, but I'm pretty sure she thinks he's going fast!"

The girl shivered involuntarily at the announcement she conveyed.

Estelle neither trembled nor even turned as ashen pale as might have been expected under such tidings; either the stunning horror was too great to allow of such emotion or her mind was too engrossed with the whole train of results to so momentous an event not to lose the present in the future.

"Quick, give me my *peignoir*!" she exclaimed, springing from the bed; and, hastily drawing on shoes, stockings, and a few necessary articles of toilet, she assumed the rich blue *peignoir* with all its swansdown which was in itself a costly and becoming costume, and left the apartment without the least abatement of her cold, haughty mien.

Louise closed the door after her, and then gave way to the womanly passion that was still strong within her.

"Cruel, heartless!" she exclaimed. "Edgar is right. She gives nothing, and she deserves nothing of sympathy or love or service. And she, poor girl, the rival gentle one over whom she triumphed, would not have treated the death of a favourite dog as this hard woman does that of a lover. I hate her. Yes, I am resolved now. She shall give all and get nothing from me. Only she must not know it. No, no. That will not suit me or Edgar either, and I love him from my heart. Yes, I, the humble maid, can despise the haughty countess, for I have the feelings that Heaven gave me in my bosom, and she has choked them with her vain, imperious passion."

Louise passed into Lady Mont Sorrell's dressing-room, and, with a mocking smile, arranged the breakfast toilet of her beautiful but distrustful mistress with mechanical and unerring precision.

Meantime Estelle passed with a measured, proud step to the apartment of the dying man. True that, with all her self control, her hand actually shook as she turned the handle of the door and paused for a moment ere she ventured to brave the sight that awaited her within.

But the weakness passed, if indeed a spark of woman's feeling might be called weakness, and as she noiselessly entered the apartment, and stepped cautiously to the bedside, the fine features were calm even to rigidity, and her voice was unmoved and low as she approached Ruth's chair.

"Is he worse? Why have you sent for me?" she said, with an imperious disdain in the very carriage of her proud head.

But she spoke to one who was little less haughty and far more unscrupulous than herself.

"You brave it well, young lady, when a few minutes perhaps may make you a murderess, and place your lover's neck in peril. Look on your victim ere it is too late to repent, and outreat for pardon."

Estelle mechanically obeyed the gesture that accompanied the behest. She walked to the side of the down bed, which had been but a couch of torture to the unhappy young nobleman in his brief intervals of consciousness.

His eyes were closed now, but the quivering lips, the gray line over the cheeks, the damp on the pale brow, told even to Estelle's inexperience an unmistakable tale. Lord Hartford's moments were numbered. To whom did he owe his early death? If Quentin Oliphant's hand had done the deed it was her own ambitious coquetry that had prompted the rash passion and pointed the aim. Ruth had said truly, "her victim lay there."

The soft rustle of her garments seemed to rouse him. His languid eyelids opened with difficulty, and turned with a recognizing glance at her white face.

"Estelle," she rather saw than heard from his working lips, "listen."

She stooped down close; she dared not risk the future remorse of disobeying the dying.

"It is you," he whispered. "You deceived me and him, and retribution will fall—"

"No, no!" she almost shrieked; "do not, do not. It was not so. I never promised him, and I would

have married you, Godfrey. Oh, pardon, pardon; it was his crime, not mine. I will atone your death. He shall be punished. Only say you forgive me, dear, poor, unhappy Godfrey."

He evidently heard and comprehended her. The poor, feeble head moved, as if to express the negative he could not speak. No sign of forgiveness, no token of belief rewarded her anxious pleading, only a contraction of the brow that might perhaps be purely physical altered the feeble abandonment which every feature betokened.

There was a slight struggle, a deep, sobbing sigh, then a gurgling in the throat, and Godfrey, Marquis of Hartford—heir to an old dukedom and ample estates, the courted of one sex and the envied of the other—submitted to the inevitable lot of man and lay before the two women a senseless corpse.

Estelle did not scream, but a cold, ice-like thrill congealed her veins and whitened her face to the hue of wintry snows, scarcely more life-like than the dead features on the soft pillows before her.

For a brief space Ruth Lovett neither moved nor spoke. Then she approached and laid her long fingers on the white lids, which were for ever to contain those dark eyes that but now sent terror into Estelle's bosom.

"Come away," she said, in a low, hoarse voice. "You can do no good now. I obeyed his bidding when I sent for you to witness his last breath. Now it matters not whether he has peeress or peasant at his side. Come, there are others at hand to do the last offices."

She laid her hand on Estelle's arm, and led her away without resistance to the apartments she had recently left.

"There," she said, placing herself coolly near the young countess, who was reclining in utter powerlessness on a sofa. "Mark me, Estelle, this is the first warning for your headstrong folly. I bade you beware. I told you that Quentin Oliphant was your fate, and you see the end of disobeying my command."

Even in her horror and dismay Lady Mont Sorrell's spirit rebelled against the insolent assurance of the dependent.

"Silence," she said, angrily. "Cease these idle ravings. I wish to be alone. Let Lady Claud be informed of what has happened, and give proper notice to the proper people. I am sure I do not know who they are. I suppose Rawdon does."

Ruth's lips literally curled with the indignant scorn that well nigh disabled her tongue from doing its office.

"Girl, are you human? are you a woman?" she asked, in a voice of rage. "Can you dare to talk thus when death is within a few yards of you—when you have been its cause, and should weep tears of blood for your sin? Beware, lest you drive even my patience too far, and bring a heavy punishment that you little dream of on your head. I will not be trifled with by you who owe all, all to me."

Estelle seemed as if the last words alone made themselves intelligible to her brain.

"Ruth," she exclaimed, starting up from her cushions, "there has been too much of this insolence; even were my present position more entirely your gift you would not be endured in your overbearing absurdity. As it is, you have no excuse—no right to dictate what I choose to do."

"Time will prove," returned Ruth, calmly. "At least, if you are wise, it may never bring its bitter lesson to your spirit. But a little—a very little more could not be retrieved. Lord Hartford is gone for ever. Your mad ambition is defeated by your own folly. It is for you to exert yourself to the utmost to save the living. Where is Quentin Oliphant? How can he be shielded and his escape secured till pardon is obtained? It is for you to lavish wealth and wit on this terrible question rather than spend precious moments in rebelling against me."

"I care not. I shall never marry him now," said the girl, with a genuine shudder. "Even if I loved him I could not."

Ruth looked curiously on her.

"I see, I see," she said. "For once you are true; but still I have planned it, and you shall not escape. You will be the bride of Pauline Lovett's suitor. I choose that in all things you shall take her place."

"Woman, you are mad, or will drive me so," exclaimed Estelle, fiercely. "You can have no pretext for such presumption, unless you have perjured yourself and your statement was all a falsehood."

A wild, terrible suspicion glared in her eyes as she looked at this strange usurper of power and rights.

"I have not—Heaven is my witness!" returned Ruth, with a look that yet Estelle could not comprehend. "You are as surely the daughter of Claud De Vesci as he was the son of the lords of Mont Sorrell; and Pauline Lovett was the adopted, falsely assumed child of the Countess Ethel. All this is solemn truth;

you need not cherish one doubt of its verity. Yet I repeat my warning—that any rebellion to my will shall bring on your head such woe as you could scarcely bear and live. Girl, for your own sake—for mine, be warned!”

But what might have been the reply to that mysterious exordium was never to be known save to the haughty girl who chafed under the hidden yoke. For at the moment a sharp tap at the door was heard, and Rawdon, the steward, presented himself as Ruth opened it.

“I beg pardon for troubling you, my lady,” he said, with a sort of respectful determination in his manner, “but you see such a business as this cannot be delayed, and might bring a great deal of annoyance on even you if it were not attended to.”

He stopped and glanced at Ruth, and the countess, stung perhaps by her taunts, or galled at the implied wonder of her own domestic, acted on the hint.

“Leave us, Ruth,” she said. “I will see you again in an hour or two; Rawdon has business with me, and you can rest after your fatigue.”

Ruth paused ere she obeyed.

Her lips opened, a faint sound even came from the closed teeth, and Estelle's proud heart throbbed with degrading terror at the possible insult that might be in store for her.

But a second thought appeared to change the mysterious will of the dependant; and, with a courtesy almost mocking in its reverence, she left the room.

“Now, Rawdon, what is it?” said Estelle, recovering her dignity and freedom of action as if some weird spell had been removed from her as the door closed.

“Well, my lady, I have already taken on myself to send for a man from Exeter just for the present. But then you see, my lady, the Duke of St. Maur must be apprized, or else the family solicitor of their house, as I believe they are away in Egypt for the winter. You will please forgive my presumption in mentioning this, my lady,” he went on, respectfully; “only you are so young, and Lady Claud so delicate, I thought it might easily be overlooked in the agitation.”

Estelle bowed her head graciously.

“You are right, Rawdon. Anything more?”

“Only—only,” he said, with a look of real regret and hesitation, “I am afraid—that is, I am told it is impossible to avoid taking measures as to the poor marquis, and—I mean as to Lord Quentin, my lady—and it is perhaps better you should know that the police are already on his track, by order of the magistrates, and, if he is not well apprized of his danger, and in a place of safety before many days or hours are over, this terrible business will be made still worse, and my poor young lord be a prisoner for murder!”

(To be continued.)

**DEATH OF A CORUNNA VETERAN.**—We have to record the death of a veteran who took part in the memorable retreat at Corunna under Sir John Moore, and who died recently at the age of ninety, at the Ride, Grosvenor Mews, Piccadilly. Jonas Williams, a Welshman, joined the 1st Regiment of Guards (Grenadier) in 1801, and served at Corunna, at which time the late Lord Clyde (Sir Colin Campbell) was a simple ensign, and was one of the retreating party. He was taken prisoner, and for three years confined in an Alpine fortress, whence he managed to effect his escape, tramping through France, and getting over in a fishing-smack. We next hear of him in 1814, when he was in the Coldstream Guards, but was too late for Waterloo; and in 1825 he received a pension of 9d. a day. Till twelve months ago he was a hale, hearty man, and worked at his trade as a tailor, but lately he was in dire need, and was assisted by a charitable society in Westminster.

**MEERSCHAUM.**—At the Berlin Geographical Society's December meeting Mr. Ziegler described the sources whence the considerable annual supply of meerschaum for meerschaum pipes is derived. Large quantities of this mineral, so highly esteemed by smokers, come from Hrubschitz and Oslawan in Austrian Moravia, where it is found imbedded between thick strata of serpentine rock. It is also found in Spain at Esconche, Valleclos, and Toledo; the best, however, comes from Asia Minor. The chief places are the celebrated meerschaum mines from six to eight miles south-east of Eskischehr, on the river Pursak, chief tributary to the river Sagarias. They were known to Xenophon, and they are now worked principally by Armenian Christians, who sink narrow pits to the beds of this mineral, and work the sides out until water or imminent danger drives them away to try another place. Some meerschaum comes from Brussa, and in 1869 over 3,000 boxes of raw material were imported from Asia Minor at Trieste, worth 345,000 florins. The pipe manufacture and carving are principally carried on

in Vienna and in Ruhla, Duchy of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. The commercial value of meerschaum carvings at these places may be estimated at 400,000*l.* annually. However, very large quantities of them are not made from genuine but from artificial material. The waste from these carvings is ground to very fine powder, and then boiled with linseed oil and alum. When this mixture has sufficient cohesion it is cast in moulds and carefully dried and carved, as if these blocks of mineral had been natural. It is said that about one-half of all pipes now sold are made from artificial meerschaum.

### WHAT BECAME OF IT?

MR. TRUEFITT was in a passion. And when a middle-aged man, with gray whiskers, a bald head, and a deep bass voice, flies into a passion, the effect is apt to be rather appalling.

“I'm sure, sir, I'm very sorry,” said Mrs. Sedgewhistle, the landlady, meekly.

But Mr. Truefitt went on, without paying the least attention to his landlady's meek accents.

“I've always heard, ma'am, about the last straw breaking the camel's back,” he mumbled out, “and this is an exemplification of it. Not enough, ma'am, to take down the stoves and take up the carpets, and deluge everything with soapuds, and give me such a cold in the head that—I feel as if a cataract was roaring away inside of my left ear, but you must have made away—no, Mrs. Sedgewhistle, I insist on you hearing me through—with a cheque for forty pounds. Just as good, ma'am, as so much money in minted gold!”

“I am sure, sir,” whimpered poor Mrs. Sedgewhistle, “I never so much as thought of such a thing.”

“Then, ma'am,” growled Mr. Truefitt, hoarsely, “what did become of it? It hadn't legs, ma'am, and it couldn't run away; it hadn't wings, and therefore it could not fly. Nobody was in my room but you, and—”

“I beg your pardon, sir,” interrupted Mrs. Sedgewhistle. “Lucy Jenison came in to get your socks to mend them. But Lucy, sir, she's a well-brought up girl, and she wouldn't touch what wasn't her own any more than—”

“Then where is it?” bawled Mr. Truefitt, whirling round in the middle of the room like a human humming top.

“That's just what I don't know, sir,” began Mrs. Sedgewhistle, “but—”

“I give you warning, ma'am,” cried Mr. Truefitt. “Twenty-four hours' notice, Mrs. Sedgewhistle! I can't submit to this sort of thing, and I won't! Lucy Jenison!”

A pretty, fresh-faced girl with brown eyes and a red, sensitive mouth, who had come to the door with a message for Mrs. Sedgewhistle, started and coloured at the sharp summons.

“What do you know about the cheque?” began Mr. Truefitt, sternly. “The cheque that has been spirited away so remarkably; the cheque that was on my table yesterday afternoon, and—”

“Nothing, sir,” faltered Lucy, turning pink and white, and beginning to tremble all over. “Oh, sir, what should I know of it? I just came in for a second. I didn't even look at the table.”

Mr. Truefitt felt his chin reflectively.

“It's a black business,” said he, “and all that keeps me from calling in the help of the police is my ridiculously soft heart. You, Mrs. Sedgewhistle, are a widow, and you, Lucy Jenison, are an orphan that works for a living. Consequently I shall not sue, but I shall leave this establishment at once!”

Mrs. Sedgewhistle sat despairingly down on the stairs, Lucy Jenison began to cry, and Mr. Truefitt shut his bed-room door with a bang that resounded from attic to cellar.

Mr. Timothy Truefitt kept his word. He packed up his belongings, and left the Sedgewhistle domains.

But the next day he came back after a vest, which he persisted had also miraculously disappeared.

“Dear heart alive, sir!” cried poor Mrs. Sedgewhistle, fairly driven desperate; “what should we do with your vest? There are no men folk to wear such things in my family, and we don't keep a shop for second-hand things!”

“It must have got somehow misplaced in your—your confounded house-cleaning operations!” shouted Mr. Truefitt, with increasing vehemence.

“Well, sir, you may search the house with a warrant for what I care!” groaned poor Mrs. Sedgewhistle; and Mr. Truefitt went grumbling away.

Two days afterward he came again, in a towering passion, after a missing pocket handkerchief.

“I had twelve, with horses' heads printed on the border, and ‘T. Truefitt’ in the corner,” said he—

“twelve new pocket handkerchiefs, and now there are only eleven.”

“I ask you, sir,” said poor Mrs. Sedgewhistle, with tears in her eyes, “what could I do with a pocket handkerchief bordered with horses' heads and marked with your name?”

“That's a question, ma'am, that I don't pretend to answer,” replied Mr. Truefitt. “But I do say that this whole business is assuming an aspect most extraordinary!”

Away he went, gesticulating and muttering wildly to himself.

After this a sort of blight seemed to come over the not-very-promising-at-best circumstances of Mrs. Sedgewhistle.

One by one her lodgers went away, and no new ones presented themselves to occupy the vacant rooms. Lucy Jenison's customers, too—she was a neat little dressmaker—fell off sadly, for no apparent reason.

People looked doubtfully at the landlady and her little friend, and somehow contrived to steer clear of them.

For the first time in her life Mrs. Sedgewhistle failed to meet her landlord's quarterly demands, and listened dismayed to his avowed intention of putting up a bill.

While poor Lucy, who had nothing to do but twirl her pretty thumbs, began to wonder how she was to live.

“It's all that old Mr. Truefitt and his abominable cheque, my dear,” sobbed poor Mrs. Sedgewhistle.

“People won't come to a house where things are said to be mysteriously disappearing, and that's the long and the short of it. Whatever we're going to do Heaven knows, for I don't.”

Lucy's tears were her only answer.

But the old proverb says that “it is always darkest just before daylight,” and so in this instance it proved; for that very afternoon there came a colerick, red-faced old East Indian, with a cartload of valises, bath-tubs, air-cushions, and other outlandish bachelor contrivances, and engaged the whole second floor “right straight through,” as Mrs. Sedgewhistle ecstatically declared.

“The front room for himself,” said she, “and the back room for his servant—a queer, brown man, with a white night-cap of a thing on his head, and big gold hoops in his ears.”

“My goodness gracious!” said Lucy Jenison.

“So now, my dear,” went on kind-hearted Mrs. Sedgewhistle, “it ain't of so much consequence if you don't pay up that odd bit of rent just yet; and, who knows? there may be better times ahead.”

Lucy shook her head softly.

“Nobody will employ me now,” she murmured, sorrowfully. “They all think I am dishonest!”

“Don't fret, Lucy,” soothed Mrs. Sedgewhistle. “As soon as ever I've seen his things straightened a little I'll put over the kettle, and you and I'll have a cup of tea together.”

The prolonged and vehement ringing of the front-room bell interrupted her.

“Land of liberty!” she gasped; “he certainly will break that bell wire!”

Upstairs she rushed, to find the old gentleman dancing up and down in a blue cloud of smoke, and the native servant sneezing until it seemed as if his rolling coffee-coloured eyeballs would fly out of his head.

“Pack my things up again, Wollah Rany!” shrieked the old gentleman. “Ma'am, why the deuce didn't you tell me the chimney smoked?”

“But the chimney don't smoke, sir,” persisted the landlady, in direct contradiction of the evidence of the senses.

“What do you call that, ma'am?” vociferated the old gentleman, while Wollah Rany doubled himself up in a fresh paroxysm of coughing.

“But it never acted so before!” cried Mrs. Sedgewhistle. “I do believe it's bewitched!”

The old gentleman began to fling his bootjacks and linen miscellaneous into a yawning trunk which stood conveniently nigh. Mrs. Sedgewhistle caught up a broom, and considerably to the relief of the coffee-coloured servitor, who thought at first she intended to attack him, made at the chimney aperture above the grate, full of sulking coals and kindlings.

“It was swept only a year ago,” she declared, “but—my stars! what's this tuckered up the draught? Why, it's a waistcoat! and here's a pocket handkerchief, bordered with blue horses' heads; and, bless us and save us! here's the cheque!”

Like a maniac Mrs. Sedgewhistle tore downstairs, waving her treasure-trove in her hand, and out into the open street, towards the tall brown house where Mr. Truefitt then resided, having “changed” six different times since he left the Sedgewhistle roof.

“I've found it, sir,” she shrieked, rushing into his presence.

Mr. Truefitt bent over his newspaper, and comprehended the situation in an instant.

“Where was it?” he asked.



"Up the chimney."  
"O-o-o-h!" said Mr. Truefitt, after a moment's silence. "I remember now; I put it there myself."

"You put it there yourself, sir?"  
"To be sure I did. You had just been cleaning house, and the floors were damp, and the carpets were up, and the stoves were down, and there was a beast of a draught, and I remember catching up the first thing that came handy—a man doesn't stop to consider, ma'am, when he jumps out of bed in the middle of the night, with his bare feet on a board floor—and ramming it up the chimney. Never thought of it afterwards, ma'am, I give you my word. Mrs. Sedgewhistle!"

"Sir?"  
"I'll take your third floor front, if it's not engaged."  
"Yes, sir," said Mrs. Sedgewhistle, beaming.  
"And, Mrs. Sedgewhistle, tell that pretty little Jenson girl to make me five-dozen shirts."

"Five dozen, sir! That's a great many at one time."  
"No matter. I shall wear them all out if I live long enough," roared Mr. Truefitt.  
So the puzzle was cleared up, as puzzles always are if we only wait long enough. A. R.

**VICTOR HUGO'S APOLOGY.**—On the occasion of the marriage of Mdlle. Gautier Victor Hugo wrote the following letter to the bride's father, to excuse his absence from the ceremony: "My dear Gautier—At the hour in which you unite your daughter to a poet I shall be engaged in marrying my paper to the people; so excuse me.—Your friend, VICTOR HUGO."

**ACTING.**—Some men, and some women, are always acting. They are just as much actors as if they were on the stage. They cannot get up or sit down, they cannot move, they cannot speak, without thinking how they appear to others. It is painful to live with such persons. They are never natural; they cannot be natural. They are constantly studying for effect in everything. We must say that we like natural people. We like a good warm grip of the hand. We like a ringing, hearty laugh, no matter how loud it is. We like words that are earnest and true, and actions that are genuine, spontaneous and instinctive. Give us warm nature rather than cold calculation.

**MAXIMS ON MONEY.**—The art of living easily as to money is to pitch your scale of living one degree below your means. Guard against the notion that because pleasure can be purchased with money therefore money should be spent without enjoyment. What a thing costs a man is no true measure of what it is worth to him; and yet how often is his appreciation governed by no other standard, as if there were a pleasure in expenditure per se. Let yourself feel a want before you provide against it. You are more assured that it is a real want; and it is worth while to feel it a little in order to feel the relief from it. When you are undecided which of two courses you would like best choose the cheaper. This rule will not only save money but save also a good deal of trifling indecision.

**SINGING IN BANDS OF HOPE.**—In a letter to the Education Department, urging the importance of continuing to recognize the Tonic Sol-Fa system, Mr. Frederick Smith, conductor of the Crystal Palace Band of Hope Concerts, says that out of 11,000 singers who have been accepted for the two concerts at the approaching Temperance Fête, 9,000 sing from Tonic Sol-Fa, and 2,000 from the established notation. This fact affords good evidence of the extent to which the Tonic Sol-Fa method has spread, inasmuch as the Band of Hope encourages neither one system nor the other. It promotes singing as a valuable adjunct to Temperance work, and, printing its selection of pieces in both notations, offers the singers whichever they prefer.

**QUAKER MARRIAGES.**—An Act of the present session (35 Vict., c. 10) extends the provisions of the statutes relating to marriages in England and Ireland, so far as they relate to marriages according to the usages of the Society of Friends. In order that the relief intended to be given by the 7 and 8 Vict., c. 81, may be made "fully effective," a provision in the 23 and 24 of the Queen, c. 18, is to be repealed, which enacted "that the party or parties who shall not be a member or members of the said society shall profess with or be of the persuasion of the society." It is now provided that, from and after the 1st of January next, the proviso shall cease; but no marriage is to be valid unless a certificate be produced to the registrar, signed by a registering officer of the Society of Friends, to the effect that the party is duly authorized to proceed to the accomplishment of such marriage according to the usages of the society; but no such certificate is to be required in cases where the party giving such notice shall declare that both the

parties to the intended marriage are either members of the society or in profession with or of the persuasion thereof.

## A DARING GAME; OR, NEVA'S THREE LOVERS.

### CHAPTER XLV.

In the early dawn of a gray wild morning Sir Harold Wynde, Lord Towyn, and Mr. Atkins arrived at Inverness.

They proceeded directly to the "Railway Hotel," and secured bedrooms and sitting-room, and ordered breakfast.

Some attention to their toilet was necessary, and after baths and vigorous brushing they met in their sitting-room, and here a very tempting Scottish breakfast was served to them.

They were still lingering at the table, discussing their future movements, when a knock was heard at the door, and the detective who had been set to watch Rufus Black entered the room.

He was a thin, small man, with a sharp business face, and looked the very ideal of a keen commercial traveller, and Sir Harold for the moment supposed that such was his vocation, and that the intruder had strayed into the wrong room. This impression was speedily corrected.

"Good-morning, my lord," said the officer, addressing himself to the young earl. "Expected your lordship up yesterday. Good-morning, Mr. Atkins. Fine morning, sir—for Scotland. My lord, can I see you alone for a few minutes?"

"Say what you have to say here, Ryan," said the young earl. "Mr. Atkins is a fellow-guardian of the young lady of whom we are in search, and this gentleman, Mr. Humlow, is also a friend of Miss Wynde. Speak out, therefore. Have you any news?"

The detective glanced half uneasily at the baronet, whose striking face announced that he was no common personage. The gray hair and gray military beard had not greatly changed Sir Harold's looks, but Ryan had never seen the baronet before, and of course conceived no suspicion of his identity.

The baronet arose and went to the hearth, sitting down before the fire, his face half turned away from the detective, who again addressed himself to Lord Towyn.

"There is news, my lord," he announced. "I succeeded in tracing Rufus Black up to this place. He stopped at the 'Caledonian.' In fact, he is staying there now."

The young earl's face kindled with excitement. "Then we cannot be far from Miss Wynde!" he exclaimed. "He has stopped two or three days at Inverness, and that proves that he has not much farther to go. Has he been out of Inverness since he came?"

The detective's face clouded a little.

"Rufus Black arrived at Inverness the day before yesterday," he said. "Upon the afternoon of the very day on which he arrived, while I was at dinner, he went off in a cab, and did not return till late in the evening. I was lounging about the door when he came back, and he looked the very picture of despair, and came in recklessly and went to his room."

"That proves that Miss Wynde is not many miles from here," said Lord Towyn. "His despair may be readily accounted for if he had just come from an interview with her."

"Yesterday," continued the officer, "he strolled about the town all the forenoon, and went to the river and visited the wharfs on the canal, and seemed to be making up his mind to something that required courage. After luncheon at the 'Caledonian' he took a cab and went off again, not returning till midnight last night."

"And you followed him?" cried Atkins.

"What, and put that sharp old ferret Craven Black on his guard?" ejaculated Ryan, in astonishment. "No, sir. We've got an uncommon pair to deal with; Mr. Black and his lady are as shrewd and keen as any old stagers I ever knew. It wouldn't do to let them suspect that we are on their track, or they would outwit us yet, and perhaps put the young lady in peril. People do many things when they get desperate that will do them no good, and are sure to harm them if found out."

A stifled groan came from Sir Harold.

Ryan shot a quick, suspicious glance at him.

"Then you are at a stand-still, Ryan," said Mr. Atkins, impatiently. "You have treed the game and sat down to wait for us?"

"By no means, sir," answered Ryan, deliberately.

"I saw the caddy after Rufus Black had gone to bed, and half-a-crown drew out of the fellow all that he knew. Mind you, my lord, gold and silver make the best cork-screws in existence. The caddy told

me all he knew, as I said, and a pity it wasn't more. He drove out with his fare to an estate called Heather Hills, between this and Nairn, on the coast, and a wild, bleak spot it is, according to caddy. They went up a long drive and stopped in a carriage porch, and Rufus Black he knocked and rang, and a housemaid came to the door, and he asked her something, and she pointed down the coast. And, telling caddy to wait, young Black went down the bluffs and struck across the fields. Caddy put an oil-cloth on his horse, for the wind was blowing free and strong from the sea, and sat there on his box, and waited till it began to grow dark, and he began to get impatient; and then at last young Black came back with a young lady dressed in black upon his arm, a hanging on to him so very fond, and a looking up at him so very tender, that caddy saw that they were lovers."

"Impossible," cried Lord Towyn, turning pale. "I will stake my very life on Miss Wynde's courage and her fidelity to me. No personal fears, no cruelty even, could drive her into accepting Rufus Black. I know her brave and glorious nature; I am convinced that she could never know a moment of weakness or yielding. The cabman has deceived you, Ryan."

"No, my lord," said the detective, doggedly. "I'll stake anything your lordship likes on his good faith. Rufus Black hung over the lady as if the ground wasn't good enough for her to walk on, and she smiled up at him as loving as—as a basket of chips," said Ryan, at fault for a simile, and concluding his comparison rather ignominiously. "The lady saw caddy and says she, blushing and smiling, 'The gentleman will stay to dinner, and you can put up your horse in the stable,' says she, 'and go into the servants' hall and get a glass of ale and your dinner.' And caddy put up his horse and went into the kitchen."

"A queer story," muttered Atkins. "Perhaps Miss Wynde was playing a part—pretending to love Rufus Black in order to throw her jailors off their guard, and so obtain a chance of escape!"

The young earl's face now flushed.

"I can't understand it," he said. "It is not like Miss Wynde to play such a part, even to effect her escape from her enemies. She is truth incarnate. She could never summon to her lips those false smiles; she could never for one moment allow Rufus Black to consider himself her favoured lover."

"The earl is right," said Sir Harold. "Neve could never play such a part. She is too truthful and straightforward."

The detective bent another quick glance at the baronet.

"Did the cabman make any farther discoveries?" inquired Atkins.

"One or two, of some importance," said Ryan. "In the first place there were too few servants for so grand a house. In the second place the young lady, with an older woman, had come up here within a week. In the third place the housemaid said that her young mistress was called Miss Wroat, but that that was not her real name, for the young gentleman had asked for her by another name. And, altogether, an air of mystery seems to hang about the young lady. But the fact of the most importance of all is that on the way home from Heather Hills last night young Black got up on the box with the caddy, and asked him no end of questions about the Scotch laws concerning marriage—if licences were necessary, if publication of banns were usual, and so on. And the young man asked him which was the best church to stop into for a quiet, informal marriage, without licence or publication of banns, but the marriage to be perfectly legal and binding."

"Ah!" said Atkins. "That begins to look as if he meant business."

"Young Black seemed to be in a gay humour all the way home," said Ryan. "He sang to himself, and talked and laughed, and acted as if he had had a fortune left to him. As they drove into Inverness he told the caddy that he wanted him to take him to church this morning at a quarter to ten o'clock, and he told him that he was going to be married to a great heiress whom he adored."

"Is there not some mistake?" asked Lord Towyn, excitedly. "Can he be in love with some other lady?"

"I should say not," said Atkins, dryly. "Heiresses are not as plentiful as oat cakes in Scotland. He's been courting Miss Wynde since last July, and was dead in love with her, as any one could see. He could not shift his affections so soon, and fix them upon another heiress. The young lady is Neve Wynde fast enough. She is either deluding him, meaning to denounce him to the minister at the altar, or to escape from him in Inverness, or else her courage is weakened, and she believes herself helpless, and has yielded to her enemies in a fit of despair."

"If she were alone upon the cliffs she might then

have attempted an escape," said Lord Towyn, thoroughly puzzled. "I cannot feel that this smiling, loving bride is Neva. I know she is not. But we will present ourselves at the marriage, and if the bride be Neva we will save her!"

"I cannot think that she is Neva," said Sir Harold, thoughtfully. "Yet, as Atkins says, where could he have found another heiress so soon? And how, if he loved Neva so devotedly, could he be so deeply in love with this young lady who has just come up to Inverness?"

"She comes from Kent," said Ryan. "The housemaid has heard her speak of being at Canterbury within the month!"

"That settles it!" cried Atkins. "It is Miss Wynde!"

"Ryan," exclaimed Lord Towyn, "you must go now and discover to what church Rufus Black is going. We will wait here for you to guide us."

Ryan bowed and departed.

He was absent until nearly ten o'clock, and the time dragged heavily to Neva's friends, who remained in their closed sitting-room, exchanging surmises and doubts, and preparing themselves for an encounter with Craven Black and Octavia.

Sir Harold put on his great-coat and turned up his collar, and wound a gray woollen muffler about the lower part of his face. He was standing thus disguised, hat in hand, when Ryan came back and quietly slipped into the room.

"The cab is waiting," announced the detective. "I have been at Rufus Black's heels ever since I left you. When I got back to the 'Caledonian' he was just going out in his cab. I rode on top as a friend of the driver, who was won over to make a friend of me by a gift of a crown. We drove to the minister's and to the sexton's, and finally to a jeweller's, where Black bought a ring. We then went back to the hotel. A few minutes ago young Black entered his cab again, and gave the order 'to the church.' I know the church, and we must get on our way to reach it if we expect to get there in time to stop the ceremony."

Sir Harold and Lord Towyn hurried impetuously out of the room and down the stairs, and were seated in a cab when Atkins and the detective reached the street. These two also entered the vehicle, which rolled swiftly down the street.

A few minutes' drive brought them to the plain, substantial kirk which had been chosen by Rufus Black as the scene of his second marriage to Lally.

The four pursuers leaped from the cab, and hastily entered the edifice by its half-open door.

Passing through the dim and chilly vestibule, they pushed open one of the baize-covered inner doors, which swung noiselessly upon its well-oiled hinges, and stood within the kirk.

It was a plain church interior, without stained glass or lofty arched windows, with bare walls and ceilings, and with the plainest of gasoliers; the reading-desk of solid oak, beautifully carved, was yet in keeping with the rugged simplicity of this house of worship.

Here the old Covenanters might have worshipped; and here their descendants did worship, in all the stern simplicity of the faith in which they had been trained.

There was no one save the pew opener in the church at the moment of the intrusion of Sir Harold Wynde and his companions. The four passed silently down the long, dim aisle, and entered a tall-backed pew, in which they were nearly hidden from view.

Lord Towyn gave the pew opener a shilling, and they were left to themselves.

"It doesn't look like a wedding," said Sir Harold, shivering in his great-coat. "If the bridegroom came on before us where is he?"

The question was answered by the appearance of Rufus Black and the minister from the little vestry, in which they had gone to warm themselves.

Rufus wore his ordinary garments, but had bought a white waistcoat and necktie, which gave him a clerical air.

He kept his eyes upon the door with an anxious, uneasy glance.

"He's afraid she'll give him the slip after all," muttered Ryan.

The green baize-covered door swung open and closed again.

Rufus Black and the occupants of the high-backed pew in the corner near the reading-desk alike started, but the arrival was only that of a few persons who had seen the open church door, and surmised that a wedding was in progress. They questioned the pew opener, and subsided into pews.

Presently a few more curious persons appeared, and took their seats also.

The occupants of the high-backed pew grow impatient. It was after ten o'clock, an early hour for a wedding, but Rufus had himself appointed the time

in his eager-impatience to claim his young wife. A cold sweat started to the young bridegroom's face. He began to think that Lally had thought better of her promise to marry him, and had decided to give him up for the worthless, weak, irresponsible being he knew himself to be.

"There's a hitch somewhere," said Ryan.

Again the baize-covered door swung open, and four persons came slowly up the aisle.

It was the bridal party at last.

Rufus Black started forward with an irrepressible eagerness, joy and relief.

Sir Harold Wynde and Lord Towyn, alike pale and agitated, regarded the approaching party with burning eyes.

First of all came the steward of Heather Hills with a girlish figure clinging to his arm. Behind these two came the steward's wife in gray silk, and Peters in black silk and crape, but with white ribbons at her throat and white lace collar and sleeves.

Sir Harold and the young earl looked at the four strange figures in a sort of bewilderment. They had expected to see Craven Black and Octavia. Not seeing them, they fixed their glances upon Lally.

The young wife had laid aside her mourning for her great-aunt upon this occasion, and wore a dress that Mrs. Wroast had bought for her upon that memorable shopping expedition immediately after Lally's arrival in London.

It was a delicate mauve moiré, made with a long train. Over it was worn an upper dress of filmy tulle, arranged in foam-like puffs over all its surface. This too formed a train. The corsage was of puffs of tulle over the moiré, and was made low in the neck and short in the sleeves.

The bride wore a tulle veil, which fell over her face in soft folds, and was confined to her head by an aigrette of diamonds.

Through the filmy folds of her veil the spectators caught the gleam of diamonds on her arms, and neck, and bosom.

The steward conducted his beautiful young charge to the altar, and bride and bridegroom stood side by side, and the minister slowly took his place.

Lord Towyn made a movement to dash from his seat, but Sir Harold caught his arm in a stern grip, and compelled him to remain.

At the moment of beholding the bride a mist had swept over the young earl's vision. His brain had seemed to swim. For the instant he had scarcely doubted in his excitement that it was Neva who stood before him; but as his vision cleared he knew that this young bride was not his betrothed wife. He knew it, although he could not see Lally's face. He missed the haughty carriage of Neva's slender figure, the proud poise of her small, noble head, the swaying grace of her movements. This young bride was not so tall as Neva, and had not Neva's dainty, imperial grace.

"It's not Neva!" he whispered, excitedly. "That is Rufus Black, sure enough, but the lady is not Neva."

"You can't see her face," said Atkins. "I think it is Miss Wynde."

At this moment the bride, with a sweep of her hand, threw back her veil. As her bright, dark face, so like a gipsy's, and with a glow of happiness upon it, met the gaze of the spectators Sir Harold stifled a groan.

Lord Towyn stared at the pretty brown face, with its fluctuating colour, and the softly melting black eyes, and a deathly pallor covered his face.

If this young girl was the chosen bride of Rufus Black where was Neva? Why had Rufus given her up? The wildest fears for her life and safety possessed him.

The marriage went on. The four pursuers who had come to interrupt the proceedings sat in their high-backed pews as if utterly stupefied. What objection could they raise to the marriage of Rufus Black to a stranger who came to the church escorted by her friends? Why should they object to such a marriage? They heard the questions and answers as in a trance. The name of Lalla Bird sounded strangely upon their ears.

When the minister said "I now pronounce you man and wife" Sir Harold Wynde and the young earl looked at each other with terrified, inquiring eyes, that asked the question that filled their souls alike: Where was Neva?

After the prayer that followed the ceremony the minister went into the vestry, followed by the newly married pair, the steward and his wife and good Mrs. Peters.

The casual spectators of the wedding stole silently out of the church.

"Well, I've come up here on a wild-goose chase," muttered Ryan, in a tone of chagrin.

"Perhaps not," said Lord Towyn. "Rufus may be able to give us some clue to his father's whereabouts, if we approach him judiciously. I am going into the vestry to see him."

"And I too," said the baronet, rising.

The young earl led the way from their pew to the vestry, Sir Harold at his side, and Mr. Atkins and Ryan behind them.

The bride, all blushes and smiles, was writing her name in the marriage register when the young earl and his companions entered the small room.

Rufus Black had just signed it and was putting on his gloves.

He gave a great start as he recognized Lord Towyn and Atkins, and stared beyond them with an unmistakable terror, as if he expected to behold the cynical, sneering face and angry eyes of his father looming up behind the intruders.

"You here, my lord?" he faltered.

"Yes, Rufus," said the young earl, holding out his hand. "We happened to be at Inverness, and have been witnesses to your marriage. Permit us to congratulate you."

Rufus drew a long breath of relief, and shook the earl's hand heartily.

"I thought—I thought——" he began, confused and hesitating—"I was afraid——But never mind. It's odd your being up here, my lord. How do you do, Atkins? Lally," and Rufus turned to his young wife, who was looking curiously at the new comers, "here are some friends of mine up from Kent, Lord Towyn, Lally, and Mr. Atkins, of Canterbury."

Lally blushed and acknowledged the introduction gracefully.

"Can we see you in the church for a moment, Mr. Black?" asked Lord Towyn.

Rufus consented, with that look of fear again in his eyes. He apologized for a moment's absence to his bride and her friends, who were now signing their names to the register, and accompanied his pursuers back into the church.

His face brightened when he found that his father was not in waiting for him in the church.

"You have a very pretty young bride, Rufus," said the young earl, pleasantly. "We have followed you up from Kent, with the idea that you were on your way to Miss Wynde. It was in this way we happened to be at your wedding. Is Mrs. Rufus Black a recent acquaintance?"

Rufus hesitated, with a quick glance at Sir Harold's muffled face and figure. Then he said bravely, resolving to act upon his new principles of straightforwardness and courage:

"It is an odd story, Lord Towyn. I have been married before to my wife, to whom I was reunited this morning. My father separated me from her, and I read in a London paper that she was dead. I discovered my mistake the other day in London. I met her in a picture shop. She came off to Scotland that night, and I found her yesterday. She is an heiress now, my lord, but the same true and loving wife she used to be. I was desperate at her loss; I was half mad. I think when I asked Miss Wynde to marry me. I never loved any one but my own wife, and I beg you to say to Miss Wynde for me that I send my best wishes for her happiness, and I should be glad to witness her marriage with you, my lord."

"Thank you, Rufus. But where is Miss Wynde?" A look of genuine surprise appeared in Rufus Black's eyes.

"Why, she is at Wynde Heights, with my father and her step-mother," he answered.

"She is not there. They have not been there. They have conveyed her to some lonely place, where they hope to subdue her into consenting to marry you," said Lord Towyn. "Can you give us no clue to their whereabouts?"

"None whatever, my lord. My father said they were going to Wynde Heights, and ordered me to hold myself in readiness to come to him at a moment's warning. I have not heard from him since he left Hawkhurst. I am now of age, and have flung off my father's authority for ever. I know no more than you do, my lord, where my father can have gone. But one thing is sure. When he sees the announcement of my marriage he'll give up the game, and bring Miss Wynde back to her home."

"He may not dare to do that," said Atkins. "He has carried matters with too high a hand, and has gone too far to make an easy retreat. Has your father any property, Mr. Black?"

"About three hundred a year," said Rufus. "His wife is rich."

"I mean, does he own any real estate?"

Rufus smiled, shook his head, and hesitated. "I don't know," he said, doubtfully. "I believe he owns a small estate somewhere, but I never brought him in a penny. It is barren, unproductive, and out of the world."

"The very place to which he would have gone!" cried Atkins. "Where is it?"

"I don't know," confessed Rufus. "You see, my father never talked of his affairs to me. In fact I never lived with him. I was always at school, and we were more like strangers, or master and serf, than



like father and son. His property may be in Wales, and it may be elsewhere. I believe there are mountains near it or around it, but I am not sure. Indeed, my lord, almost any one who ever knew my father can tell you more about his affairs than I can."

Rufus spoke with a plain sincerity that convinced his hearers of his truthfulness.

"We have had our journey to Scotland for nothing," said Atkins.

Ryan looked crestfallen.

"We will detain you no longer, Rufus," said Lord Towyn, a shadow darkening his fair and noble face. "Make our excuses to your bride for taking you from her so soon after your marriage, and accept our best wishes for your future prosperity and happiness. Now good-morning."

With an exchange of courtesies and friendly greetings the party broke up, Rufus Black returning to his young wife and her wondering friends, to make all necessary apologies for his absence from them, and Lord Towyn and his companions making their way into the street.

"What are we to do now?" demanded the young earl as they paused at the open door of the cab.

Sir Harold looked at his daughter's lover with haggard eyes.

"I am worn out with excitement and fatigue," said the baronet, in a low, weary voice. "I will go back to the hotel and lie down. I must not become worn out. Heaven knows I shall need all my strength."

"And you, Atkins?" said Lord Towyn.

"I shall try to catch a nap also," said the solicitor, gloomily. "I'm tired too. I can't stand it to go banging back to Kent by the first south-bound train."

"And you, Ryan?" asked the earl.

"I don't know," said the detective. "I want to think over what has happened, and see if I can get any new ideas."

He raised his hat, and walked away.

"I'll take a stroll about the town, Sir Harold," said the earl. "I feel strangely restless, and not at all sleepy. I slept very well last night in the train—as well as I have slept since Neva disappeared. I'll meet you and Atkins in our sitting-room at the 'Railway Hotel' by four o'clock."

Sir Harold and Atkins entered the cab, and were driven to their hotel.

The young earl watched the cab until it disappeared from sight, and then he walked down the street, idly taking his way towards the river.

The wind blew strong and fiercely—a very winter wind, as cold and keen as if it blew directly from the North Pole, and having suggestions of icebergs in it. The young earl shivered and drew up his coat collar.

"Pretty weather for this season," he muttered. "The gale of the night before last has not quite blown itself out, and is giving us a few parting puffs."

He walked down to the wharfs and stood by the water's edge, his hat pulled over his fair brows to keep it on, his hands in his pockets, the very picture of a careless saunterer, but a great wave of despair was surging in his heart.

"My poor Neva!" he said to himself. "Where is she this wild day? Does she begin to think I am never coming to rescue her?"

His wild glances, straying over the boats in the river, settled at that instant upon a graceful yacht just coming to anchor. He could read on her stern her name—"The Arrow." He watched her idly for a long time. He saw a boat lowered from her deck and two sailors descend into it. A gentleman in a great-coat and tall silk hat followed them, and was rowed towards the shore.

The young earl started, his blue eyes flaming. Something in the attitude and carriage of the gentleman excited his keenest scrutiny.

As the boat came nearer, and the faces of its occupants were revealed more plainly, a strange cry sprang to Lord Towyn's lips.

He had recognized in the tall stranger gentleman his own and Neva's enemy—Craven Black!

#### CHAPTER XLVI.

It was a strange fatality that had brought Craven Black to Inverness at the very time when his enemies were there, engaged in a search for him. The cold weather had set in early in his Highland retreat, and already a foretaste of winter reigned in the Wilderness.

Octavia's cold had settled upon her lungs, and she coughed dismally, and in a way that made Atreus tremble lest the wealth upon which they all counted and Octavia's life should die out together.

Medicine was needed imperatively, and so were all manner of winter supplies; and it was for these things Craven Black had ventured from his stronghold like some beast of prey, and when he should

have obtained them he intended to return to the Wilderness, and there wait patiently until Neva should yield to his infamous demands that she should wed his son.

He sprang nimbly from the boat on reaching the wharf, and, taking the cigar from his mouth, said, in a voice loud enough to convey his words to the ears of Lord Towyn, whom he had not even seen:

"I am going up among the shops, boys, to make my purchases. I shall go nowhere except to the shops, for I don't want to incur any risks. Be guarded, and say nothing to any one about your business or employer. I shan't go aboard under two or three hours, and you can spend the time as you like. Here's a crown to divide between you, but don't get drunk. Remember, we must get all our stores aboard early, and be off at daybreak in the morning. Be back at the boat here in a couple of hours."

The men assented and took the money given them, hurrying away. Craven Black walked in an opposite direction, and was soon lost to view.

Lord Towyn turned his gaze on the yacht. He saw that a man had been left in charge of the vessel, for the captain stood on the deck smoking a pipe.

A waterman was rowing along the river near the wharfs, and Lord Towyn signalled him. He came up swiftly to the edge of the wharf upon which the young earl stood, and doffed his tarpaulin.

"Row me out to the yacht yonder," said Lord Towyn, springing into the boat. "I'll board her on the farther side."

He sat down, and the waterman pulled lustily out into the stream. In a very brief space of time the boat had crept into the shadow of the yacht on its farther side, and the young earl climbed lightly to the deck.

The captain approached him, scowling.

"Hullo, you there; what do you want?" he demanded, gruffly. "This here's a private yacht, sir."

"So I supposed," said his lordship, coolly. "It belongs to Mr. Craven Black, doesn't it?"

The pipe fell from the captain's hands. He changed colour.

"I don't know what makes no difference who it belongs to," he said, blustering. "I work for pay, and it makes no difference to nobody who I work for. Get out of this, young man."

"Come, come," said Lord Towyn, sternly, his blue eyes blazing with a light that terrified the captain. "None of your bluster, fellow. It won't avail with me. I know with whom I am dealing. You are the servant of Craven Black, and what have you to urge against my having you indicted with him for the abduction of Miss Wynde?"

The captain fairly gasped for breath. He looked helplessly towards the shore.

"I haven't done nothing," he muttered, presently, quailing under the steady, fixed and stern gaze of the earl's blue eyes. "I'm hired as captain, and I am captain; but that's all. On my soul, I ain't no party to no abduction."

"Your past character will be examined to throw light upon your present motives and doings," said the earl, with a telling random shot.

The captain winced and quavered.

"Now see here, my man," said Lord Towyn, following up his advantage. "If you have done anything wrong in the past it will be like a leaden weight to drag you down when the officers of the law arrest you for assisting in the abduction of Miss Wynde. It makes no difference to you who I am. Your game is up. The officers of the law have accompanied us from London. There are four of us in all upon the track of Craven Black. Refuse to do as I tell you and I'll call yonder policeman on the wharf and give you up on the charge of abducting a lady of rank and fortune."

"What do you want of me?" the captain asked, falteringly. "I haven't had my pay from Mr. Black, and he'll kill me if I betray him."

"He need not know that you have betrayed him," said our hero. "You need not leave this vessel. All that you have to do to secure your safety is this: Tell me exactly the whereabouts of Miss Wynde, and her friends will follow the yacht at a safe distance, quite out of sight from your deck, and you can remain on board and collect your pay of Mr. Black. He need not suspect that you have betrayed him."

"What will I gain by betraying him?"

"Your freedom from arrest. You see the policeman still stands on the wharf? So sure as you refuse to speak, and speak quickly, I'll call him!"

Lord Towyn meant what he said, and the captain comprehended the fact. He saw that Craven Black had been caught in a trap, and with the usual instinct of villany he resolved to save himself from the general ruin.

"You promise that I shall be protected if I tell the truth?" he asked.

"I do."

"I suppose it's penal servitude for abducting a young lady," said the captain. "Jack said so last night. Blamed if I haven't been tired of the job anyhow. I don't mind a mutiny at sea, when there's cause, but I can't relish making war on a helpless girl, and I haven't from the first."

"Come to the point. Where is Miss Wynde?"

"At a place up in the mountains owned by Mr. Black, and called the Wilderness."

"Miss Wynde is there, and Mrs. Craven Black?"

"Yes; and the servants, and Mrs. Atreus."

"How far from here is the Wilderness?"

"About twenty miles, if you could go direct, which you can't. It's forty miles by water. You know Cromarty Frith, up in Ross—and—Cromarty?"

Lord Towyn assented.

"You go about half-way up the Frith, and turn into a river that leads up among the mountains. The stream grows narrower as you ascend, but the water remains deep, and at last your boat fetches into a small loch lying at the foot of the mountains, and surrounded by them. A steep mountain rises right before you. Half-way up its side lies a wide ledge, and on that the house is built. It's a wild-looking spot, sir, and a dreary one. It's mighty cold up there, and I haven't relished the prospect of spending the winter there not by no means."

The earl asked several questions, to make himself conversant with the route, and also to make sure that the man was not misleading him. Assured on this point, he said:

"Craven Black intends to return home in the morning. He must not suspect that you have betrayed him. Keep the secret, and we will do so."

The captain's look of fear showed conclusively that he would be careful not to allow his employer to suspect his treachery.

After a few more words Lord Towyn re-entered his boat and returned to the shore.

"Anything more, sir?" asked the waterman as the boat came alongside the wharf.

"Nothing more—unless," added the earl, with a sudden thought, "you could direct me to a small vessel, a fast sailer, that I could hire for a day or two. I should want a couple of men to take charge of her."

"I don't know of any such boat," said the waterman, scratching his head. "Yet 'The Lucky' might suit you, sir, though it isn't a gentleman's boat. She's built for a fishing vessel, is brand new, and had a trial sail the day afore the gale, when she went like a bird."

"I'd like to see her. Take me out to her."

"The Lucky" lay out in the stream, half a mile farther inland. Lord Towyn rowed out to her, and found her joint owners, two brothers, on board. He went over the vessel, and found it new and clean, and in fine order. The owners were willing to let the little craft with their services, and the young earl hired it for a week, paying in advance twice the sum the thrifty Scotchmen demanded for it.

"She must be provisioned immediately," said Lord Towyn. "Her destination is a secret, which I will tell you in the morning. I have three friends who will make the excursion with me. We shall want blankets, and all kinds of cooked meats and stores. We must leave Inverness at day-break. Come ashore with me, one of you, and I will select the stores we are likely to need."

One of the brothers accompanied the earl ashore, and conducted him to various shops, Lord Towyn keeping a keen look-out for Craven Black, in order to avoid him.

Blankets, mattresses, and bed linen were sent down to "The Lucky"; various kinds of cooked meats, including rounds of roast beef, roasted chickens, meat puddings, ham and veal pies, smoked salmon and broiled ham, were packed in hamper and sent aboard; and Lord Towyn added baskets of fruits, both dried and fresh, and jams and confitures of every sort in abundance, besides boxes of biscuits of every description.

"It looks like a voyage to India," said Macdonald, the one of the two brothers who had accompanied Lord Towyn ashore, contemplating the array of stores with kindling eyes. "We could provision a ship's crew to Australia with these."

"Whatever is left you will be welcome to," said the earl, smiling.

The young lord saw his new purchases deposited on board "The Lucky," and himself attended to the arrangement of the little cabin, and then paying his waterman liberally he returned to his hotel.

The day had passed swiftly, and he found that it was nearly five o'clock of the short afternoon, and the street lamps were lighted, when he entered his hotel and went upstairs, two steps at a time, to his sitting-room.

(To be continued.)



[IN VINO VERITAS.]

## FORTUNE-HUNTING.

It was a clear, crisp night in October. In the most farmhouse Alice had lived all her life, and now, as she stood in the parlour, she felt a sadness that could not be wholly stifled by her dreams of ambition, her strong longings for some great, some active life.

There was a bright wood fire on the hearth, but she had thrown up a window and stood by it, looking on to the low piazza, whose vines were faded by the early frosts.

There was no moon: the clear, star-shen came in at the window, and was lost in the glare of the fire. The girl was not alone.

Leaning against the window, his eyes looking absently out into the old-fashioned flower-garden, stood the friend and companion of her childhood and later days.

She was not thinking of him then, or if she was her thoughts were so mingled with her reminiscences of past years that she could not separate the two. Indeed he was mixed up with all her days, whether happy or sorrowful.

But he was thinking most decidedly and intently of her, though he was not looking at her. It seemed to him that the parting to-morrow would be like the wrenching asunder of soul and body—that without her he should have only the dead flesh to carry about, with no object, no hope.

If she would only promise him that she would think of him—that she would one day allow him to claim her hand and heart! He was suffused with a sudden tremulous heat as he thought of such a possibility.

"After all, Alice, are you sorry to go?" he asked, delaying the utterance of what he must say before he left her.

She turned her dark eyes to his face, and smiled somewhat sadly as she said:

"Oh, yes, unspeakably sorry! It seems almost as

though I were cutting myself loose from a safe, quiet life, and might be tossed among tempests before I got back to harbour again. I feel as if I were leaving this life for ever."

Her companion's face flushed with fear and eagerness as he said, quickly:

"Don't go then, Alice. Stay with us. Is not this life good enough, after all?"

"I can't stay," she replied, shaking her head decidedly. "With my aunt I shall have opportunities for culture which I can never have here. I shall only half know life. I want to do something—to be something!"

The bright glow came to her cheeks, the brilliancy to her eyes. She did not know what misery her friend was experiencing yet endeavouring to conceal from her.

"In the meantime," he said, with grave sorrow, "I shall be just where you leave me; I shall have no chance for the cultivated polish you will acquire. What shall you think of me when you return, if you ever do come back? What shall you think of me?"

He had suddenly taken both her hands, and was looking with a trembling, fiery earnestness at her.

"Think of you?" she repeated, a blush, in spite of herself, overspreading her face, for he had never looked at her in that way before. "I shall think of you as one of my dearest friends—as one to be trusted and believed in always."

"In no other way, Alice? I shall remember you as one whom I love with all my life. Heart and soul are yours. I shall love you always!"

The words were uttered with a tone utterly different from any he had used before, with an impetuous earnestness that startled her. Her head drooped, her lips quivered, and tears filled her eyes.

"Oh, John," she said, under her breath, "I am sorry you have spoken like this!"

"Then you are sorry I feel like this?" he asked, growing paler as he spoke.

Her face told him before her lips said "Yes."

"Did you think I could see you almost every day since we were children, share all your griefs and pleasures, dream of you as I have done since childhood, and not love you? During all my life every hope and aspiration has centred in you. Alice, is it true that you do not love me at all? Not enough even to give me any hope for the future?"

There was a pleading pathos in his tone that penetrated to her heart.

"It cannot be my fault, John," she said. "I did not know you felt thus. I have never thought of such a thing. Oh, my friend!" she continued, with a sudden tender tone, "forget all this; be my friend, as of old!"

She suddenly extended her hand to him with a gesture of entreaty. He held it fast, while he said, gravely:

"I cannot forget. I must love you; but believe me I will neither trouble nor importune you. I should not care for a love for which I was obliged to entreat. I will be to you always a sincere friend. Never hesitate in asking a favour of me. You know I would never take advantage."

As the girl listened to the deep, sincere tones she felt a sudden and sure rest, as if a foundation of truth was offered for her support. But this was not the love she had dreamed of—indeed her ideas were too vague to be put into words—but in the future to which she was going she expected to find some hero who would stir all the romance of her nature.

She thoroughly liked John Winship, and after the manner in which he had just spoken to her she felt a strange and unwonted tenderness towards him; but she told herself it was only the natural result of a last night at home, of remembrances of his goodness in the past. It was easy to think that, after all, it was a mere fancy of his that he loved her. He would soon forget her. Yet that thought brought an unacknowledged pain.

"You will, at least, write to me?" he said as at last he took his hat to go.

"I shall be glad to write to you and to hear from you," she said. "I shall be lonely at first. There will be nobody that will care for me."

Alice's voice faltered a little.

"There will soon be people enough who will care for Mrs. Granger's ward," said John, bitterly. "Shall you know the gold from the dross?"

"They will not harm me," was the confident answer of the girl of nineteen.

"Say a kindly good-bye to me," he said, dreading to go, yet feeling that he must. "Give me something to remember through all the long, weary days to come. Heaven knows how I shall endure them!"

She put her hand in his, trying hard to keep the tears from her eyes.

"You will let me—this time?" he murmured, drawing her to him, and pressing his lips to hers in a way that made her cheeks burn as she thought of it in her chamber a moment after.

Carosses had been rare between them; he had not touched her lips before since they had been little children.

He did not come to see her next morning before she left the farmhouse. She had half hoped he would, and hurriedly dressed even earlier than was necessary.

Arrived at the little railway station she looked for him, holding, with trembling hand, the arm of her stepmother. But the train thundered along, and in a moment after she was whirled away, without seeing him again.

Then her thoughts gradually left the country village, and flew onward to the great city, towards which she was speeding. She felt a sad feeling, mingled with something of triumph, that this girl who journeyed away would never come back again—never in the old spirit with the old heart.

Slowly the crowd poured from the cathedral—the dark-faced, deep-eyed crowd that indicated it was beneath an Italian sun that this high holiday was celebrated. With the mass of people, swayed with them, curiously observing them, and between whiles looking round for her party, from whom she had become separated, was a richly clad girl, whose proud, intelligent face was very different from most of the countenances about her.

At first she had tried to get away from the crowd, but she was drawn in irresistibly, and finally desisted from her efforts and yielded to the force that bore her on, thinking that, once in the street, she could free herself and find her company. But, before half the people were out, from some quarter of the vast cathedral rose the alarm of "Fire!"

Alice Granger's heart seemed for a moment to cease beating, for that cry infused the spirit of wild animals into the gay concourse. In that first moment of horror Alice felt that fire itself would be kinder than these terrible beings. It was in vain that she



struggled to get back—for she preferred staying in the building. The fiends themselves would have been no more thoughtless and pitiless. They rushed on, trampling upon the helpless ones, crushing, shouting, and praying.

Death seemed near to the girl. She closed her eyes to avoid seeing the distorted faces about her. Her clothes were already tattered, her limbs half paralyzed; she could not make a single movement. It was then that an arm of iron grasped her, a swift hand dealt a few furious blows about her, and in some miraculous way the crowd immediately about her was made to part a little, and she was drawn backward until at last she and her unknown friend stood in a solitary place in the church.

After one or two long breaths, that restored strength to her frame, she withdrew from the arm that supported her, and looked up at her companion. It was a dark, handsome face that she saw, it was a figure of careless elegance. Her rescuer might have been thirty-five, and if there were marks of dissipation, if there could be unpleasant lines in that face, Alice did not see them. She only knew that he was looking at her with solicitous admiration, that he said, in a deep, melodious voice:

"I hope you are not hurt?"

"No, thanks to you. Save a general sense of confusion, I have not been harmed." Then, with a sudden look around her, she added, "But is not the church, then, on fire?"

"Not visibly so, as you perceive. I think it was a false alarm. Will you permit me to take you to your friends?"

"I shall be very grateful if you will do so," she replied, feeling strongly the apparently restrained interest and admiration in the stranger's looks and tones.

Edward Randall did not neglect to improve his time in the ten minutes' ride from the cathedral to the hotel occupied by Alice's party. Indeed it was very rare for him to waste an opportunity when with ladies; and at the door of the hotel he bowed to Alice, having permission to call and see her, and leaving a deeper impression on her fancy than any man had done since she had been the courted *protégée* of her aunt.

Sanctifying down the street, he met a couple of his acquaintances, who apparently had been watching for him. Less polite, possessing less of the actor's talent, they were very evidently of that class called "fast," with no redeeming trait in their appearance.

"We've been lying in wait for you, Randall," said one of them, "for we are nearly dying with curiosity. Who the deuce was that girl? I've seen her twice within the last week. I shouldn't mind having a smile from her myself."

"You!" said Randall, with ill-concealed contempt. "I don't mind telling you however of the success of a little plot of mine."

He slowly lit his cigar, a smile of exultation gleaming in his eyes.

"I've noticed that girl lately," he went on, "and I confess I've been rather taken with her. There's some tangible inducement to win her. I inquired on the sly, and found she's Alice Granger, and heiress to a hundred thousand from her aunt. That settled the question, of course. The next feeling was to become acquainted with her. I thought I'd make a bold stroke, so as to be on an intimate footing directly on account of a spice of gratitude. I followed her to church to-day, and, after the services, I raised a cry of 'Fire!' The pack of idiots made a stampede; I kept near Miss Granger, and at the right moment I rescued her from the crowd. It was rather tough work, and spoiled my hat and coat, as you see; but I mean she shall pay for them."

The three had sat down beneath a tree, and Randall took his cigar from his lips, watching intently the long spiral column of smoke as it rose in the air. Seeing him then, no one would have thought his face handsome.

"By George!" cried one of them, "I don't envy the Granger when she becomes Mrs. Randall!"

"Don't be profane," remarked Randall, quietly. "I shall make her a good husband—a model in fact. I like her; she's about the kind. Meanwhile I invite you to a tip-top supper at our mansion one year from to-day."

"We'll be there," was the response. "But supposing the Adonis falls?"

"Impossible. Then I'll give you a spread anywhere you say at the time."

"Then it's settled," said the two, with a half-incredulous laugh, noting the engagement down in their pocket-books.

Alone in her room at the hotel, Alice was thinking, with a somewhat heightened colour in her cheeks, of a pair of eyes that had looked at her with evident admiration, of a musical voice that had addressed her with such winning respect. But Alice was not weaker than many another woman who had

listened to that same voice. For the first time since early girlhood had she seen one whose manner and look seemed the reality of her dreams—who was the hero of all her idle imaginings. And the manner of his introduction lent a charm of romance to him.

It was with some concern that Randall heard, the next day, that the party in which travelled Mr. and Mrs. Granger, were to leave in a day or two, to journey straight to Scotland, and thence back to London. But in the next thought he had decided to go with them, and adroitly mentioned his intended journey when he called, before they had told him of their own intentions.

He succeeded, as he always had done, only he had never yet reached the acme of his desires—marrying a fortune.

By the time the Grangers arrived in London from their tour Randall was their intimate friend, and so conspicuously devoted to Alice that Mrs. Granger began to think about his position, and what fortune he might be possessed of.

He talked modestly and vaguely of his income, but more definitely and proudly of his family; and Mrs. Granger, greatly as she prided herself upon her perception, was deceived by him.

Was he not delicately attentive to herself?

"There is an old friend in the parlour waiting for you," said Mrs. Granger, one morning, a month after their return. "Go down just as you are, without guessing who it is."

Alice slowly descended the stairs, thinking of Randall, and knowing it was much earlier than he ever made his appearance. She stood for a moment in the open doorway before he saw her. She saw his profile—noble, manly, handsomer than she had remembered him. Then she stepped forward, and he rose to meet her.

Once more she laid her hand in that of John Winship, and looked into his clear, truthful eyes.

She was conscious of some change in him. He was elegantly but not finically dressed; his bearing had an ease and assurance in it which the country boy of twenty-one had not known. His face flushed, a splendour came to his eyes, as he touched her hand again.

They were both thinking how the other had changed, improved. Then, after the first few moments of constraint, they fell naturally into the easy and intimate way of old friends.

A quiet, sweet warmth diffused itself through Alice's heart as she found herself once more in his presence. It was a feeling so utterly different from the feverish, infatuated, yet uncertain pleasure she experienced when with Randall that it almost startled and alarmed her.

Winship had risen to go, and was standing by her, his very presence seeming to enfold and shield her, while his deep, irresistibly tender glance was bent upon her, when Randall sauntered in, unannounced, as if he were at home.

He was very visibly surprised at seeing the gentleman there; he halted for an instant, then advanced with outstretched hand, saying:

"It's really you, isn't it, Winship? You surprised me almost out of my power to recognize you."

Winship took the proffered hand, uttering a polite but not cordial greeting. Then he turned to Alice, with some indescribable cloud on his face, and made his adieu.

He walked down the street with a more rebellious, unhappy feeling than he had ever experienced. His love had noted with suspicion the manner of Randall as he had bent over Alice's hand—the tender ownership of his demeanour towards her.

"It is misery, it is death itself, for her to marry him!" he exclaimed to himself as he walked up and down the room appropriated to him at his sister's house. "The fellow has fascinated her. He wants her money, and she will be his victim. It must not, it cannot be!"

All the repressed love of his life surged up in irresistible waves of feeling. He knew this man, and thinking of him in association with Alice made him shudder.

For a long while he tried in vain to think of some means by which Alice could be made to realize the character of her lover, and that it was not herself whom he courted.

At last, with a sort of despairing hope, he told his sister, who entered with earnestness into his feelings, and with feminine ingenuity suggested a plan so simple that Winship anticipated an entire undeceiving in consequence.

A week later Winship called upon Randall on some pretext or other, and half an hour afterwards the two were sauntering down the street together, Winship with a mighty effort being suave and cordial.

They approached his sister's house, and Winship said, carelessly:

"My brother-in-law bought a lot of champagne last night which he prides himself immensely up-

on. Come in, and tell me what you think about it."

Randall did not object, but he said as he mounted the steps:

"It seems to me, Winship, you are not quite so formal as I fancied you were when I first saw you. Has town life converted you—eh?"

"Perhaps you misunderstood me," was the reply as the two sat down in the parlour, and Winship rang and ordered the wine.

He absently touched his lips to the glass, while Randall drank his with an air of a connoisseur.

"That's good," he said. "By-and-bye I shall have the right kind in my cellar, I'll wager."

He poured out another glass.

Though not in the least intoxicated, he had evidently been already exhilarated by drink that morning.

"Your cellars are rather mythical, I imagine," said Winship, his listening ear detecting the faint rustle of draperies in the parlour beyond, whose doors were half open.

"They won't be so for long," was the response. "I shall have them well stocked before next winter's out."

Winship looked up inquiringly.

"Oh, I shall marry a fortune, and a pretty girl into the bargain. I've spoken for the Granger niece."

The speaker did not see the pallid hue that overspread his listener's face—he did not know how near he was to being kicked out of the house; but Winship controlled himself, and asked, quietly:

"Has she accepted you?"

"Yes, but she hangs off about the marriage, which I wish to be directly. She says she hardly knows me yet—which is exactly what I mean she shall not do. To tell you the truth, Winthrop, I like the girl. She'll be no encumbrance at all."

He talked on, in the way some men who have been taking wine will talk to other men; then he left, and Winship went up to his own room.

In half an hour Alice Granger, who had been out with Winship's sister, and had accompanied her home, left the house and walked rapidly home, with paler face and a steel-like sparkle in her eyes.

When Randall called again he received a few cold, decisive words from a girl who seemed barely to tolerate his presence. Those words precluded the possibility of his ever calling again.

The dream of fascination was broken by the lips that had woven it. Alice's nature rebounded into the healthy channel natural to it. A beautiful and pure love came to her life, and at last she knew that in truth she had never given her heart to any one save the faithful lover of her childhood. O. E.

**CORRUPTIONS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.**—Many of the most recent Americanisms are highly imaginative, formed as they are on metaphorical principles. Take these for example: "Shell out," in the sense of paying from one's own purse, is a metaphor drawn from the opening of the shell to extract the fish. "Mudsill," as a term of reproach, applied by the Southerners against the Northerners, meaning the very dregs of the lowest strata of society, from mud-sill, the beams which underlie the "sleeper" on a line of railway, applied figuratively, first, to the lower classes, upon whose labour the upper classes rest in security and wealth. "To come out at the little end of the horn," meaning to be unfortunate in a speculation of any kind, has been traced to the fairy story of a pigmy or elf, which, being imprisoned in a cow's horn, was foolish enough to squeeze through the little end of the horn, instead of passing through the larger aperture by the mouth. Then, "to bet one's pile," which means, to stake or risk all one's wealth, or to make the greatest of all sacrifices, is a term from the gambling-table, and originally was limited to staking all one's money, heaped in a pile on the gambling-table. Language, in America, like everything else, is on a big scale. Schools are "academies" and "colleges"; holidays are "vacations" and "recesses"; boys "young gentlemen"; servants are "helps" or "clerks"; wives are "ladies"; letters are "epistolary advices" or "communications"; much larger is "a nation sight bigger"; a good deal is "a nation deal." The following expressions we think peculiar:—"To rush it" (to perform a bold action). "To happily," "to fix" (to settle a matter). With the singular expression "to ring" (facts into a person's mind) we may compare our own indigenous expression to keep "ding-donging" at a person. It is a singular fact that English and American telegraph clerks employ the letters "O. K." to denote that a message sent is "Oll Korroct" (all correct); an expression that arose in this way, according to Dr. Leland's account. In New York, about the year 1845, one district was distinguished by a banner bearing this strange device:—"The Fourth Ward, O. K." Next day, every-

body who had seen the sight neglected business to compare notes with others as to its significance. At last the public bewilderment rose to such a height that one individual, more curious than the rest, resolved to beard the author-sphinx in its den. He went to the secretary of the "Fourth Ward Democratic Committee," who, surprised at such ignorance, loftily exclaimed, "The old Fourth, having got tired of stale mottoes, has, for novelty's sake, adopted a commercial one from our leading merchants. Don't they say, when they would affirm that a clerk can be implicitly relied upon to produce a balance on the right side, 'Oll Korrekt'?" The banner-painter acted up to his instructions in the way we have seen. With American corruptions of our pronunciation we need not here concern ourselves, though some of these are very curious, as "chile" for "child," "hull" for "whole," "nawthing" for "nothing," "suppose" for "suppose," "pint" for "point," "saasy" for "saucy." As a rule, the weak preterite is preferred to the strong preterite, hence the vulgar use of "growed" for "grew," "throwed" for "threw," "knowed" for "knew," "frezed" for "froze," and even "seed" for "saw." The verbs "transmogrify," "cachot," "honeyfogle," and "highfalutin" are all indigenous to American soil, as well as the "chunk" (of bread) for a "piece." "Hada'n't ought" is used for "ought not," "had have had" for "has had," "got to get," "got to go" for "must get" or "must go," "to get shet of" for "to get rid of," "it tain't so" for "it is not so." The prepositional adverb "up" is very commonly used with all sorts of verbs; hence a school is said to "take up" for "to begin"; a man is said to be "used up" for "exhausted," to be "picked up" for to be "deceived," and "cracked up" to be "praised," and to be "fixed up" to be "dressed" or "ready;" to "sail up" to "prosper," and to "sing up" to "flatter." What would Shakespeare, or Milton, or Hooker, or Addison have said at such pollutions of the well of English undefiled by the infusion of streams so muddy?

#### ROSE OIL.

The rose oil, or attar of roses, which Europe consumes at present comes almost exclusively from the southern slopes of the Balkan, where, in some 150 places, the ingathering of the rose blossoms and the manufacturing of the rose oil take place. The quantity of oil which is produced in the South of France is very unimportant as compared with the quantity of the Turkish produce. The most important Turkish districts where this dear article is produced are Tahirpan, Philippopolis, Carlova, Zeni-zaghra, and Kizanlik; this last is the most important of all.

Professor Dr. Hochstetter, from the Vienna University, in his reports to the Geographical Society, Vienna, of his travels through Roumelia, has given very important data of the produce of oil at Kizanlik. These data, which have been reproduced by Mr. Blunt, the Vice-Consul at Adrianople, with the addition of drawings of the apparatus used in the process of manufacture, may serve to remove many incorrect statements published upon the subject.

The roses planted in the basin of Kizanlik have light-red blossoms. They are planted in rows like the vine. Sometimes roses and vines are planted intermingled on the same plot. The most important species of roses planted there are *Rosa damascena*, *sempervirens*, and *moschata*. The first of these is also planted in the south of France, the last mentioned, having a slight musk flavour, gives the chief material of the produce of the Indian rose oil.

The roses are gathered in their blossom state during the month of May, and are subjected to distillation, together with their green calyx leaves. The distiller consists of a tinued copper boiler, from which runs a pipe into the cooling tub. In every boiler are placed 5000 lbs. of water and 2000 lbs. of roses, and the heating takes place over an open fire. The mass is boiled for two hours; the first part of the distilled fluid is put again into the boiler, the then condensing fluid is gathered into bottles of broad bottoms and straight necks. Water and oil are distilling over at the same time, the latter of course swimming on the surface. When there is a layer of oil of the thickness of a finger it is removed. This is done by a funnel-shaped spoon with a very thin opening at the top, which permits a passage to the water but not to the oil. By careful distilling, 5,000 lbs. (German weight) of roses give 1 lb. of oil. The so-called freezing degree—that is, the degree of temperature when the separation of the solid parts takes place—varies, with the oils of Kizanlik, between 8 to 16 degrees Réaumur, equal to 50 to 68 degrees Fahrenheit.

The best oils get solidified at these degrees. They come from the colder mountain districts, whereas the oils from the warmer localities get solid at 12 to 16 degrees Réaumur, equal to 59 to 68 degrees Fahrenheit.

heit. These oils, marked strong oils, have a less delicate flavour, and are by the ignorance of the traders preferred.

Such a valuable substance as the rose oil is very often exposed to adulterations. These take place most extensively at the home of the oil, where also the substance for adulteration is produced on a large scale. This article, also an ethereal substance, is called in India "rosia oil," in Egypt "idria oil," and in England "ginger oil." It is distilled from grass species of *Andropogon* and *Cymbopogon*. The idria oil is sometimes called "geranium oil." The distillers often adulterate the rose oil with geranium oil, which is imported from Alexandria. This is but idria oil exported from Bombay.

The rose oil is exported in round tinned copper bottles, called "kunkoumas," which, when filled, are closed by soldering.

#### FACETIÆ.

WHY is a spider a good correspondent? Because he drops a line by every post.

JOSH BILLINGS says: "Never do any work before breakfast. If it is necessary to work before breakfast, have your breakfast first."

A NEW FACE.—A curate being overhauled by his bishop for attending a ball, the former replied: "My lord, I wore a mask." "Oh, well," returned the bishop, "that puts a new face on the affair."

THE QUALITY OF MERSEY.—An enthusiastic pisciculturist declares that some day he hopes to see salmon in the Mersey. We should consider them very Dicky Sam-on!—*Fun*.

#### A "PLAY"-FUL QUESTION.

Wife: "Where have you been to-night, Henry?" Husband: "Oh, at my literary club, as usual." Wife: "Nothing but 'clubs'! Were there no spades, nor aces, nor diamonds—oh?"

#### UNCLES AND AUNTS.

Old Gent: "You know that Solomon advised the sluggard to go to the ant, for—"

Seedy Parly: "Yes; you see in those days uncles had not come forward so prominently as in the present day."

EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCE.—Said a friend to a merchant, who was trying to collect some outstanding bills, "You have a good deal of money coming to you, haven't you?" "Yes," replied the merchant; "and I can't help wondering why I have to run so often after what is coming to me."

HOPELESS INFATUATION.—A young lady has taken up dentistry for a living. All the gentlemen patronize her. One young man has become hopelessly infatuated with her. Consequently he hasn't a tooth in his head. She has pulled out every one of them, and made him two new sets and pulled them out.

#### SUPPEREROGATION.

Country Maid (having first seen "Missus" and the Children into a Cab): "Oh, coachman, do you know the principal entrance to Drury Lane Theatre?"

Crabbed Old Cabby (with Expression of Ineffable Contempt): "Do I know! Kim sup!"—*Punch*.

#### AN ADDED CHARM.

Mr. Raparee: "Why, I like champagne very well, but I enjoy it best, Miss Belden, when I take it after you."

Miss B.: "How so?"

Mr. R.: "Why, then I drink it from your eyes, and it sparkles with double brilliancy."

RECIPROCITY OF SENTIMENT.—Olive Logan commenced one of her lectures at Newark, recently, with the remark: "When I see a pretty girl I want to clasp her to my arms." "So do we," shouted the boys in the gallery. For a moment Olive was non-plussed, but, recovering her self-possession, she replied: "Well, boys, I don't blame you."

#### A PLEASANT DESCRIPTION.

Servant: "Pleas, m'm, 'ere's Mr. Wilkerson?"

Mistress: "Mr. Wilkerson?"

Servant: "Yes, m'm, that—er—that fine Atlantic gentleman with a cask in his eye!"

[But she only meant "athletic gentleman with a cast in his eye."—*Fun*.

#### THE ANTI-TOBACCO MOVEMENT.

Lady: "Ah, Leggett! I wish I could induce you to part with that pipe!"

Leggett: "Why, lor, mum, I shouldn't ha' thought you smoked; but you're verry welcome to it, and you'll find it as nice a little pipe as ever you put between your lips!"—*Fun*.

OVER-RESPECTFUL.—A lady sent her Irish servant for a new velvet mantilla which was at her dress-maker's. "John," she said, "if it rains take a cab; I would rather pay the cab-hire than have my mantilla wet." When the man handed her the mantilla it was ruined, the paper which covered it being saturated with water.

"Why, John," she said, "I told you to take a cab if it rained." "So I did, mum, but sure you wouldn't have your footman ridin' inside? I got on the box with the driver."

WHAT THEN?—A rather grand and dramatic style of expression came to a sudden collapse in court the other day. An indignant witness exclaimed: "The first time that I ever did such a dishonourable act I would blow out my brains, sir." "Very good," said the counsel; "and what would you do the second time?"

BELLA AND BELLS.—The Emperor of Germany has presented twenty-two cannons to Cologne Cathedral, to be cast into a large bell. These cannons of the cathedral having seen active service themselves are well qualified to call others to attend service. Of course whenever this bell rings it will tell that service is by-gone.—*Fun*.

#### EFFICACY OF KINDNESS.

Discerning Child (who has heard some remarks made by Papa): "Are you our new nurse?"

Nurse: "Yes, dear."

Child: "Well, then, I'm one of those boys who can only be managed by kindness; so you had better get some sponge-cake and oranges at once."

CAUSE AND EFFECT.—A lawyer, upon a circuit in Ireland, who was pleading the cause of an infant plaintiff, took the child up in his arms and presented it to the jury suffused with tears. This had a great effect, until the opposite lawyer asked the child, "What makes you cry?" "He pinched me," answered the little innocent. The whole court was convulsed with laughter.

#### MENTOR AND TELEMACHUS.

Unsuccessful Oar: "I say, Muscles, how do you account for my breaking down?"

Trainer (reproachfully): "Oh, verry easily, sir. Yer would read while yer was in course of 'trainin', and I always told yer that books and literator and them things spoiled the 'ands, and was death to a good education."—*Punch*.

#### ONE AND ONE ARE ONE.

A correspondent encloses us the following advertisement, which he designates as absurd and unmeaning:

Board and Residence, for a married couple, lady or gentleman. Terms moderate.

We don't see the absurdity—married couples are by the marriage ceremony made one, and the advertiser merely suggests delicately that it is unimportant to him which one the two are.—*Fun*.

#### GLORIOUS TIDINGS.

What shall not be done, in the way of honour, to our friend King Cole? H. M. daily announces that at the New Show House at South Kensington

Visitors can dine after the Exhibition closes, as well as previously.

This is delightful. Two fine appetites for one shilling! Gentlemen who find it difficult to dine once, and who, to attain that object, have recourse to unholy sherry-and-bitters, notice this! *Punch* has taken a season ticket, to ensure himself twelve dinners a week, taking his chance on Sundays.—*Punch*.

TOO STRONG.—A certain French gentleman, having been but a very little while in England, was invited to a friend's house, when a large bowl of punch was made—a liquor he had never seen before, and which did not at all agree with him; but, having forgotten the name of it, he asked a person the next day, "What day all call that liquor in England which is all de contradiction—there is de brandy to make it strong and de vater to make it small, de sugar to make it sweet and de lemons to make it sour?" "Punch," answered the other, "I suppose you mean." "Ay! punch, begar!" cried monsieur, "it almost pouch my brain out last night."

A LESSON FOR HUMANITY.—If ever we cease to admire the intelligence and docility of dogs, and their superiority in many respects to our own race, may we suffer the fate of the impertinent hunter Acteon. A certain shopkeeper has a pup that several times upset a can of paint in his playfulness, and to remind him that he must not keep up that mischievous practice the master rubbed his nose in the odorous mixture. A day or two after the playful canine forgot himself and upset the can again, and at once bethinking him of the punishment, and noticing his master was busy, rubbed his own nose in the paint and ran howling and whining out of the back door. What human creature would accept his chastisement in such a Christian spirit?

TIGHT LADS.—A rational order has proceeded from head-quarters. His Royal Highness the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, in a memorandum recently issued, directs that "in future, clothing for recruits be fitted as loose as possible, to enable them, as they increase in size from good diet and healthy exercise, to undergo their drill without impeding the free use of their lungs and the action of the heart."



Nothing could be wiser in its way than this improvement of the British soldier's uniform, except the extension of its principle so as to provide easily fitting clothes for him when rations and drill shall have developed him from an attenuated recruit into the plenitude of a full private. A tight uniform is so bad a thing for the soldier that there cannot be a worse, except the personal tightness of the wearer when he has got tight himself. And observe, that, when a man is tight both in himself and in his tunic and trousers, tightness of dress is attended with laxity of discipline.—*Punch*.

#### THE LATEST STRIKE. (BY SPECIAL TELEGRAPH.)

The washerwomen of Teignmouth have struck! "Tabby or not tabby" is their motto. The strike was a surprise; at any rate it was sudden! They have taken a line of their own, and vow they won't stir a peg if not treated properly. They say they can hold out for any length of time, being well off for soap. They have appointed a committee and elected a chairwoman, who is always addressed as "the wash-up-full chair." They say they will stand to their rights as they did to their tubs, and never give in, though their legs give out. They are much encouraged by the success of the sailors' strike, for they say if they could prove victorious at sea the washerwomen ought to conquer on dry land and in laundry. They have plenty of iron in the fire, and will wring their rights from their employers, whose efforts to throw cold water on their attempts have hitherto failed to damp them down. Their determination is of an iron mould. The movement is not likely to be readily brought to its close, as this war of independence boasts many female Washingtons, who have issued a proclamation from which it is possible a few small articles may be rubbed out, but by the main principles of which they will stand as fixedly as starch.—*Fan*.

#### IN THE MANGER!

For wedlock's bond I never sigh;  
In freedom's light I love to bask me;  
I wouldn't marry 'em—not I  
If twenty duchesses should ask me!  
I never yearned for worldly pelf;  
I love to dwell alone and humble,  
To sew my buttons on myself,  
And, when I prick my fingers, grumble.  
I own there's one occasion though,  
When even my contentment fails;

\* I do not like the girls I know  
To go and marry other males!

I know I should be quite at sea  
At aught beyond a mild flirtation;  
And nursing "cherubs" is to me  
A most unpleasant occupation.  
Till true-love's course shall smoothly run,  
And while unfettered hearts are plenty,  
It may be sweet to cherish one—  
But I prefer to worship twenty!  
But, ah! the even rosy glow  
Of my contentment sadly pales  
When any of the girls I know  
Will go and marry other males!

From gout I'm not entirely free—  
But gout befits my social station;  
I'm older than I used to be—  
But *that's* the case with all creation.

So, why the daisies I adore,  
Although they smile upon me sweetly,  
Will go and fancy some one more  
Is what perplexes me completely!  
Perhaps I feel no crushing blow—  
No gnawing pang my heart assails;  
But still I hate the girls I know  
To go and marry other males!—*Fan*.

#### WHAT THE BURMESE AMBASSADORS OUGHT TO BE SHOWN.

A crowd at a railway-station struggling for their tickets at one small aperture, two feet by nine inches. The streets after a couple of rainy days. One or two of our four-wheeled cabs. All the public statues.

A butcher's boy in full career along a crowded thoroughfare. Leicester Square.

The House of Commons voting away a million or so of the public money. The House of Commons deeply interested in a personal squabble.

A few of our most accomplished street-beggars. An Irish election. A City feast.

A City church, with a clergyman (handsomely remunerated), clerk, beadle, pew-opener, sexton, and organist, but no congregation worth counting. The British Museum—if it does not happen to be shut.

The British quart wine-bottle. Samples of the necessaries of life well adulterated.

The neighbourhood of a flourishing gin-palace at twelve o'clock on Saturday night.

A very High Church. (N.B.—The interpreter should explain to their excellencies that Popery is not the established religion of the country at present.)

The interior of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Our roomy and convenient law courts.

Our organ-grinders.

A beadle.

A match-making mamma.

The inside of an omnibus on a pouring wet day.

The admirable arrangements at the Royal Academy for taking care of parasols, sticks, and umbrellas.

A third-class railway-carriage.—*Punch*.

#### IS IT WORTH THE PRICE?

MORE men in search of the icy Pole,  
The mythic staff around which we roll.  
More treasure, ships, and lives maybe,  
All sacrificed to the Polar Sea.

What if they find both the Pole and Sea?  
What better then shall earth's children be?  
Who wants a home that he needs must share  
With a friendly seal or polar bear—

Silence and glaciers, snows and fogs,  
Train-oil and darkness, and wolfish dogs?  
And though Aurora may gild the night  
One needs must freeze while he sees the sight.

No ship on the errands of commerce bent  
Would cross by the new-found continent;  
No church will rival the ice-berg's spire,  
No chimney shelter a household fire.

"Science?" I know. As the old wife waits,  
Going backward down to the Blessed Gates,  
Looking earthward yet for some token set  
Of the brave Sir John, whom she can't forget;

Think you, all the charts that explorers gave  
Can hide from her that unsodded grave?  
Think you the wives of the missing men  
Can say good-speed to the search again?

There shall be new tales of beleaguered ships,  
Amid toppling bergs and the ice-floe "nips";  
Of men who yearn in their weary search  
For the sound of bells in the village church.

Snow-blind and faint with the ceaseless stare,  
They shall stumble on through the summer's glare;

Weary and worn for the vanished light,  
They shall fight the gloom of the Arctic night.

Is there life to aid, or a soul to save,  
E'en a cairn to lay on a brave man's grave?  
Is there wrong to right, or a heart to cheer,  
Shall the search go on? Yes, and persevere.

But this: to outline on a chart anew,  
Where a good ship carried her colours through,

To claim fresh fields of the sterile ice  
At such fearful cost—Is it worth the price?  
E. L.

#### GEMS.

TRUTH is an immortal flower—a thing that has nothing to fear from circumstances, a post where danger has no power.

A NATION'S character is the sum of its splendid deeds; they constitute one common patrimony, the nation's inheritance. They awe foreign powers, they arouse and animate our own people.

DECISION and promptitude, even though sometimes a man may err for want of due deliberation, will in the long run more often conduce to success than a slow judgment that comes too late.

THERE are three kinds of men in the world—the "Wills, the Won'ts, and the Can'ts." The former effect everything; the others oppose everything. "I Will" builds our railroads and steamboats; "Won't" doesn't believe in experiments and nonsense; while "I Can't" grows weeds for wheat, and commonly ends his days in the slow digestion of bankruptcy.

#### HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

BUTTER.—The German *Agriculturist* says that a great portion of the fine flavour of fresh butter is destroyed by the usual mode of washing, and he recommends a thorough kneading for the removal of the buttermilk, and a subsequent pressing in a linen cloth. Butter thus prepared is pre-eminent for its sweetness of taste and flavour—qualities which are retained for a long time. To improve manufactured butter we are advised by the same authority to work it thoroughly with fresh cold milk, and then to wash it in clear water; and it is said that even old and rancid butter may be rendered palatable by washing

it in water to which a few drops of a solution of chloride of lime have been added.

TO PRESERVE BREAD A LONG TIME.—Cut the bread into thick slices, and bake it in an oven, so as to render it perfectly dry. In this condition it will keep good for any length of time required. It must, however, be carefully kept from pressure; otherwise, owing to its brittleness, it will soon fall to pieces. When required for use dip the bread for an instant into warm water, then hold it before the fire till dry; then butter it, and it will taste like toast. This is a useful way of preserving bread for voyages, and also any bread that may be too stale to be eaten in the usual way.

#### STATISTICS.

POPULATION OF THE PRINCIPAL TOWNS IN GERMANY.—We learn that the population of the principal cities and towns of Germany is as follows:—Berlin contains 828,013 inhabitants; Hamburg, 235,365; Breslau, 208,026; Dresden, 177,035; Munich, 169,264; Cologne, 129,251; Magdeburg, 114,549; Königsberg, 112,123; Leipzig, 107,575; Hanover (with Linden), 106,520; Dantzig, 94,377; Stuttgart, 91,623; Frankfurt-on-Main, 90,748; Strasburg, 85,529; Bremen, 82,900; Nuremberg, 82,929; Stettin, 76,154 (or, with the entire municipal district, 97,781); Barmen, 75,074; Altona, 73,864; Aix-la-Chapelle, 73,722; Elberfeld, 71,775; Düsseldorf, 69,452; Chemnitz, 68,150; Brunswick, 57,380; Osnabrück, 57,335; Posen, 56,932; Halle, 52,408; Mühlhausen (Alsace), 52,000; Essen, 51,768; Metz, 51,107; and Augsburg, 50,451. If Elberfeld and Barmen be taken together they form a town of 146,819 inhabitants. The population of the states composing the German Empire on the 1st of December, 1871, was found to be 41,058,139 souls, against 40,106,958 in December, 1867, being an increase of 951,181 inhabitants, or 2.37 per cent. in the last four years.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

QUEEN VICTORIA has banked with Coutts and Co. for years.

THE Burmese Embassy bring some splendid presents for the Queen, amongst them a gold necklace of beautiful workmanship, weighing several pounds.

THE strongest swimmer in the world has just arrived in Paris. Colonel Raps is the name of the gentleman, and he is an American.

NOW that Dr. Livingstone is said to be found, could not some arrangement be made to keep him from getting lost again?

THE building of the new Post Office and the Home and Colonial Offices has been suspended on account of the strike.

FORCE AND ENERGY.—By "force" in rigid signification is understood the power of producing "energy;" by "energy" the power of performing work. To give an illustration: powder has force, the cannon-ball energy; but to speak of the force of the cannon-ball is inexact. It may also be remarked that the words "actual" and "potential" are in frequent use to qualify the state in which energy is met with. By actual energy is meant energy in an active state, energy which is doing work. By potential energy, energy at rest—energy capable of doing work, but not doing it. In a bent cross-bow there is potential energy—energy in a state of rest, but ready to become actual or to manifest itself when the trigger is pulled. Again, actual energy is evolved from the sun. By vegetable life this is made potential in the organic compounds formed. In these organic compounds the energy is stored up in a latent condition; potential energy is reconverted into actual energy when they undergo oxidation during combustion, or in their utilization in the animal economy.

GAMBLING MADE USEFUL.—It is not often that a taste for gambling is so well regulated as seems to have been the case with the late Sir Henry Bulwer. The young man made his *début* in 1827, when he was attached to the Berlin Embassy. Taking Paris in his way, he won there between six and seven thousand pounds at play. This he adroitly converted into the starting-point and foundation of his diplomatic fortunes. There was then a whist-playing set at Berlin, mustering principally at Prince Wittgenstein's and including the leading personages of the Court. The high stakes (500 louis the rubber was not uncommon) kept the members of the English Embassy aloof, with the exception of Bulwer, who fearlessly risked his recently acquired capital. Although by no means a first-rate whist-player, he eventually came off a winner, and from the incidental gossip of princes and ambassadors at the card-table he learnt a great deal about more important matters from which his official superiors were shut out.

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## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**X. Y. Z.**—First thoroughly cleanse the cabinet with soap and cold water. Then carefully apply some black japan varnish to the parts which are not covered by the gilded figures. Afterwards paint these figures with a sort of gold water which can be purchased at the colour shop, or which can be prepared in the following way:—Dissolve a small quantity of gold leaf in aqua regia, and drive away the acid by means of boiling, when the gold will be found to be in a state of minute division. Then add oxide of bismuth, in the proportion of one grain of bismuth to twelve grains of gold, and a small quantity of borax and gum water. Use a camel's hair brush when you apply the above solution to the figures on the cabinet.

**EMMA B.**—1. The bailiff would seize the jewels certainly. Of the furniture he would leave nothing beyond a bed and a blanket or two; and if the amount for which he levied rendered it necessary he would take all the wardrobe with the exception of a simple change of clothing. 2. The young man cannot compel the lady to marry him, but, if he choose, he can bring an action against her for the breach of promise. 3. We shall have pleasure in reading and answering as many letters as you feel inclined to send. One each week will not at all tax us. 4. Business letters are as often written in the third person as in the first. 5. The handwriting is not pretty; it is diffuse and careless perhaps, but it is legible and thus is good.

**S. F.**—Defects of temper are seldom completely cured; though the peculiarity be under the influence of a strong control it will often make itself manifest upon occasions of more or less importance. If therefore she dislikes the temper of her proposed husband she should seriously consider whether she will allow the courtship to continue, for nothing is so necessary to comfort in married life as congeniality of temper. For a woman to perform her part in an endeavour to make married life happy it is important that she should take pains to secure a good husband in every sense of the word. This being accomplished, she should faithfully keep her promise made at the altar and obey, serve, love, and honour him. That is the answer to your inquiry as to the "best and surest way of keeping peace and happiness in married life."

**G. M. (Westminster).**—1. Cat-skins are dressed like many other furs by being first trampled in or saturated with salt butter, then the smoother side is passed over a hot iron to remove the integuments. They are cleaned by being immersed in sawdust, which is afterwards beaten out with a cane, a process which is repeated if necessary; they are sometimes finished by the application of some cheap inodorous spirit in the nature of an antiseptic. 2. Unless under special circumstances, a man should not marry until he has attained the age of twenty-five. 3. Anatomical and physiological studies are usually pursued in the schools of medicine. The code of honour is variously taught; often in the society of good companions, and in the advice of worthy men. Amongst its elements are found the practice of truth and consideration for the feelings and position of others.

**G. V. Y.**—In the manufacture of "lucifer matches" the splints being duly prepared are first dipped into melted sulphur, a twist being given to the bundle by the operator in order to prevent the splints being glued together. The bundles are afterwards dipped in a paste of which phosphorus is an ingredient. Some makers use the following compound:—Phosphorus 1 part, nitre 10 parts, fine glue 6 parts, small (the colouring matter) 2 parts. For the sake of the health of the factory hands the red phosphorus, discovered by Schroetter a few years ago, should be used; it is much less volatile than the common phosphorus. In the manufacture of "safety-matches" phosphorus does not form part of the composition placed on the match, although it is one of the ingredients of the friction paste with which the sides of a "safety" box are covered.

**C. L. M.**—1. To make hot cross buns: Mix together 1 lb. of flour, 1 lb. fine moist sugar, 1½ oz. of ground allspice, cinnamon and mace mixed, a gill of yeast; add sufficient of the above to a pint of lukewarm milk until the latter becomes of the consistence of cream. Cover it over and let it stand two hours. Then melt to an oil 1 lb. of butter, stir it into the above solid ingredients, next add the thickened milk and as much more milk as will render the whole a soft paste. Wait another hour. Then mould with the hand the dough into buns about the size of a large egg, lay them in rows three inches apart, set them in a warm place until they have risen to double their size, after which bake them in a hot oven. During the baking impress them with a tin mould in the form of a cross. 2. Pianoforte instruction books can be purchased

of Messrs. Boosey and Co., Holles Street, from one shilling upwards. 3. The handwriting is good enough.

**CONSTANCE.**—1. Marmalade is best made from Seville oranges. The loaf sugar used must be equal in weight to the oranges. These with the addition of a little water are the only ingredients. They are so manipulated as to extract every atom of virtue from that portion of the orange, which is eventually thrown away. Place the peels of the oranges in a preserving pan, and, having covered them well with water, let them boil until they will submit easily to the insertion of a fork. Then strain them through a sieve, reserving the liquor for future use. Scrape all the pith from the peels and cut them into thin slices about an inch long. From the inside of the oranges carefully remove all the outside white skin, and all the inner white skin, and pipe, throwing both skin and pith into the liquor above reserved. Strain again and to the liquor add water in proportion to the number of oranges. Into this liquid put the prepared peels, the prepared pulp, and the loaf sugar. Let the whole boil for half an hour. During the boiling skim well, and the manufacture of your marmalade is completed. 2. To make vegetable marrow jam: Cleanse the fruit, cut it into slices, remove all superfluities, to every pound of fruit add 1½ lb. of crushed loaf sugar, place the above in a preserving pan over a good fire, and upon boiling skim well. The process will be completed after boiling for a quarter of an hour, stirring well all the time. Some people think the addition of essence of ginger desirable for the sake of the flavour. 3. The handwriting is bold, legible, and has a little style.

## ONLY GOING TO THE GATE.

Like a bell of blossom ringing  
Clear and childish, shrill and sweet:  
Floating to the porch's shadow  
With the faintest fall of feet,  
Comes this answer softly backward,  
Bidding tender watcher wait,  
While the Baby Queen outruns her,  
"Only going to the gate."

Through the moonlight warm and scented  
Love to Beauty breathes his sigh,  
Lingering, to leave reluctant,  
Loth to speak the low good-bye;  
Then the same old echo answers,  
Waiting love of older date,  
And the maiden whispers backward,  
"Only going to the gate."

Oh, these gates along our pathway,  
What they bar, outside and in!  
With a vague outlook beyond them,  
Over ways we have not been!  
How they stand before, behind us—  
Till-gates some, with price to pay;  
Spring-gates some, that shut for ever;  
Cloud-gates some, that melt away!

Just across their slender weaving  
Troth-plight happy hands have crossed,  
Yet its locks have rusted rudely,  
Or its keys in night shade lost.  
Over latches softly falling  
Good-bye prayers have dropped like dew;  
Little gateways softly shutting,  
Yet have cut a love in two.

So we pass them going upward  
On our journey, one by one,  
To the distant shining wicket  
Where each traveller goes alone;  
Where the friends who journey with us  
Strangely falter, stop and wait;  
Father, mother, child, or lover,  
"Only going to the gate."

E. L.

**ANNA K.**, twenty-three, medium height, and amiable, wishes to marry a dark, industrious young man about twenty-six.

**DARK HAIR**, twenty, pretty, and accomplished, wants to marry a young man about twenty-five, industrious, and loving.

**ELLEN M.**, nineteen, fair, auburn hair, and domesticated. Respondent must be about twenty-five, fond of music, and affectionate.

**L. W.**, thirty, rather tall, fond of home, and a tradesman. Respondent must be a well-educated young lady about twenty-six.

**M. V.**, twenty-five, tall, good tempered, and a domestic servant, is desirous of marrying a young man in the Navy about twenty-nine.

**E. K.**, thirty-three, short, fond of children, and rather dark. Respondent must be about thirty-six, and handsome; a mechanic preferred.

**GEORGE E.**, twenty-seven, 5ft. 9in., handsome, fond of children, and industrious. Respondent must be about twenty, moderately tall, pretty, and in possession of a little money.

**SAM H.**, twenty-seven, short, and able to keep a wife comfortably. Respondent must be a young lady who is fond of music and children, about twenty-three, and accomplished.

**MARIAN JEANETTE M.**, twenty-six, domesticated, and is in possession of a little money. Respondent must be about thirty, fond of music, and amiable; a native of Manchester preferred.

**CHARLES R.**, twenty-five, rather tall, handsome, fond of music, and in a lucrative situation. Respondent must be about twenty, pretty, accomplished, and in receipt of a good income.

**K. Q.**, nineteen, blue eyes, auburn hair, and the only daughter of a gentleman in an independent position. Respondent must be about twenty-five, handsome, and a tradesman.

**ROBERT S.**, twenty, pretty, a brunette, accomplished, and has some money. Respondent must be a more than twenty-five, fond of music, and an officer in the Army.

**MAGDALENE**, twenty-seven, medium height, rather fair, domesticated, and able to make a young man happy, is

desirous of marrying a young man about thirty, tall, and industrious.

**MADGE**, eighteen, medium height, domesticated, and fond of home. Respondent must be from twenty-three to twenty-six, tall, handsome, and if a native of Liverpool preferred.

**HUGH**, twenty-six, 5ft. 9in., and a tradesman in a good position in one of the principal seaport towns in England. Respondent must be about twenty, accomplished, and affectionate.

**NORA**, twenty, medium height, a domestic servant in a gentleman's family, and very fond of children. Respondent must be from twenty-three to thirty, and in a very good situation.

**CLARISSA**, thirty, rather tall, dark hair and eyes, in receipt of a little money, and a widow. Respondent must be about thirty-six, a mechanic, fond of music, and of a loving disposition.

**GABRIEL**, twenty-nine, short, good tempered, a native of Birmingham, and in a good situation, with excellent prospects, wishes to marry a young lady who is pretty and loving.

**CHARIE**, twenty, handsome, very fond of music and singing, and is in possession of a little money. Respondent must be an officer in the Navy not more than twenty-five.

**FLORA**, thirty-three, good looking, very fond of music, and thinks she could make a working man's home comfortable. Respondent must be about forty, and fond of children.

**CHRISTIE**, twenty-five, pretty, a brunette, good pianiste, loving, and has lived in France nearly twenty years. Respondent must be about twenty-nine, dark, and well educated.

**THOMAS T.**, twenty-one, 5ft. 6in., very good looking, dark hair and eyes, and in receipt of a good salary. Respondent must be about nineteen, fair, lively and cheerful, able to sing, a good pianiste, and of a loving disposition.

**ONE IN EARNEST**, twenty-five, good looking, medium height, dark hair and eyes, highly respectable, and has a little money. Respondent must be good looking, of a lively disposition, and able to cook a dinner; one domesticated preferred.

**H. E. W.**, twenty, middling height, gray eyes, dark brown hair, loving, industrious, and a domestic servant. Respondent must be a dark, steady, sober young man, about twenty-five, able to keep a wife well, and have a good income.

**JOHN W.**, twenty-two, very tall, pleasing, dark hair, eyes, and whiskers, very good looking, and in possession of a very good business. Respondent must be tall, dark, handsome, fond of home and music; a young lady with money indispensable.

**EMILY R.**, twenty-two, medium height, fair, curly hair, blue eyes, and domesticated, would like to marry a tall, good-looking gentleman about 5ft. 9in., not more than twenty-seven. Respondent must be very loving, fond of home, and able to make a wife happy; an Englishman preferred.

## COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

**Y. B.** is responded to by—"R. S." domesticated, loving, fond of home and business.

**L. N.** by—"Rose F." twenty-three, medium height, pleasantly good looking, respectable and ladylike, brown hair, blue eyes.

**CONSTANCY** by—"Jeer Blocks," twenty-two, 5ft. 7in., dark complexion, loving, a seaman in the Navy, and thinks he would suit "Constancy."

**FRED C.** by—"Carrie," twenty, medium height, who thinks she would make a good wife; she is loving, domesticated, dark, passable looking, and also very respectable.

**CLARA NEVILLE** by—"S. W. L.," twenty-one, has an income of 150*l.* a year, fair complexion, light blue eyes, brown hair, and thinks he should make a good husband for a gipsy.

**VICTOR AND RUPERT** by—"Adeline" and "Sylvia," sisters. "Adeline" is tall, fair, ladylike, and accomplished. "Sylvia" eighteen, medium height, pretty, dark, merry, piquante, and affectionate, and prefers "Rapert." She is a model little housekeeper.

**JOE H. S.** by—"Susan B.," twenty-one, tall, dark, affectionate, fond of children, and thinks she would make "Joe H. S." a good wife; by—"A Sailor's Sister," nineteen, well educated, dark, very affectionate, a lover of children, lively, good tempered, a splendid singer, a pretty good player, and quite capable of managing a house; and by—"Marie Stuart," seventeen, tall, a brunette, a lady by birth and education, and will have plenty of money.

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